

Class F74

Book .D75C6

Copyright No.

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

HISTORY OF DRACUT



Silas R. Coburn.

HISTORY *of* DRACUT

MASSACHUSETTS

CALLED BY THE INDIANS AUGUMTOOCOOKE AND
BEFORE INCORPORATION, THE WILDERNESSE
NORTH OF THE MERRIMAC. FIRST
PERMANENT SETTLEMENT IN 1669
AND INCORPORATED AS A
TOWN IN 1701

By Silas R. Coburn

"History has a great office, to make the past intelligent
to the present for the guidance of the future."
Charles Knight

1922
Press of the Courier-Citizen Co.
Lowell, Mass.

F74
.D75C6

Copyrighted, 1922
By Silas R. Coburn



MAR 16 1922

©CLA654947

no. 1

DEDICATION

TO THE PEOPLE OF DRACUT, MASS.

AND TO ALL DESCENDANTS OF THOSE STURDY PIONEERS WHO
WERE THE EARLY SETTLERS IN THIS VICINITY
WHEREVER THEIR LOT IS CAST

This Memorial

IS DEDICATED WITH RESPECT AND AFFECTION BY
SILAS ROGER COBURN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ix

CHAPTER I—Settlement of Dracut..... 1

II—Period of the Glacial Movement..... 20

III—Indian History 30

IV—Early Grants and Allotments of Reserved Land 65

V—Establishment of the Province Line.... 97

VI—Early Wars 108

VII—The Revolutionary War..... 117

VIII—Shay's Rebellion and War of 1812..... 162

IX—War of the Rebellion, Indian and Spanish Wars 168

X—War with Germany and Her Allies.... 176

XI—Church History 182

XII—Mills and Industries..... 210

Including Woolen, Cotton, Carpet and Paper Mills, Saw and Grist Mills, Fulling and Carding Mills, Tanneries and numerous miscellaneous industries.

XIII—Schools, Libraries and Lyceums..... 225

XIV—Roads, Ferries and Bridges..... 241

XV—Cemeteries, Physicians and Tragedies.. 274

XVI—Mines, Quarries and Fisheries..... 285

XVII—Electric Service, Dracut Water Supply System 294

XVIII—Survey of Roads..... 298

By Hon. B. F. Varnum.

XIX—Miscellaneous Subjects 312

XX—Biography and Genealogy..... 364

CONCLUDING REMARKS 434

INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORY OF DRACUT is now presented to the public in accordance with the request of the citizens of the town for a history which would embody in one volume the various subjects which relate to its existence. I make no claim to any special knowledge of events or superior ability to place them upon record. No writer of a work of this nature can prepare the material from a personal knowledge of the facts, for the participants have, with a few exceptions, gone "To the pale realms of shade, where each must take his chamber in the silent halls of death," and even their existence has been forgotten.

Facts and information have been gathered from different sources. The records of the town have been carefully studied, though as the town clerks of the earlier years did not realize the need of a full account of the transactions of the town, it has been difficult to record the proceedings of those years. No record of the first ten years of the town's existence has been preserved, and whatever events of that period are here recorded have been obtained from other sources.

The Registry of Deeds and probate records of Middlesex County have been examined and much information from this source supplements the records of the town. The State archives have been examined and material relating to the years before Dracut received a name has been gathered. Valuable assistance has been rendered by members of Dracut families who have preserved the business papers and letters of earlier days. Too often these have been considered of no value and have been destroyed. To the historian many of these seemingly worthless papers have proved invaluable. These old documents yellow with age, often nearly illegible, in handwriting strange and cramped, make clear many difficult problems in historical matters. Old letters, old account books and old diaries have contributed facts obtainable in no other way. The residence of a lifetime in or near Dracut has assisted materially in the compilation of this work. The many changes wrought in these years are thus recorded from personal recollection, and acquaintanceship

with the old residents has furnished opportunity for storing the memory with their reminiscences. These facts have been verified as far as possible by personal observation which has extended over several years, as I long ago realized the value of a town history and commenced collecting information, hoping that in the future some one would weave it into a book and thus retain it in a permanent form.

No history of Dracut has ever been published from which to learn of the proceedings of earlier days and much which is of value has been lost. As the present generation passes away and traditions are forgotten, these collections will be of value to those who take our places as citizens of the Town of Dracut. In the collection of these facts I have been ably assisted by many who have been interested in the production of a history and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their kindness. I feel especially indebted to the late Edwin M. Currier, formerly of this town, as many a problem has been solved by him which, only for his patient and careful study, would remain unsolved. Much of the success attained by these records is due to his unremitting labor. I am also indebted to Walter McK. Draycot of Lynn Creek, B. C., Canada, for information relating to the Dracuts of England which have given the town its name and which is the only Dracut in the United States. A study of the early records of England has enabled him to trace the history of the name back to the time of the Norman Conquest in the year 1066, and to the Roman occupation B. C. 54. I acknowledge valuable assistance rendered by Miss Elizabeth Coburn of Varnum Avenue, whose collection of old papers furnished information which could be gathered from no other source. Many facts relating to Indian history and the Revolution have been found among old papers owned and carefully preserved by Mrs. Clarence G. Coburn, now residing in Pawtucketville, and cheerfully placed at my disposal; also to Mr. W. T. S. Bartlett and Mr. J. M. Wilson for contributions to the Indian History.

The trustees of the Dracut Town Library have assisted in the work by advice in relation to publication of the book. The financial assistance which makes it possible to place the history before the public has been given by the citizens of the town,

who at the annual town meeting held February 2nd of the past year, 1921, voted to defray the expense and appropriated money for this purpose, appointing the Library Trustees a committee to attend to the publication. I wish to thank all who by furnishing information or by words of encouragement have assisted me in this work, which is the result of twenty-eight years' study. I do not assert that the work in every respect is absolutely correct. Errors will creep in however careful a writer may be, and I trust that the reader will be lenient and will understand the difficulties to be encountered in the preparation of a work of this nature.

There are, to some extent, facts recorded in this work with which the present generation is acquainted, but I believe that as household utensils are placed upon the shelves of a museum for the instruction of future generations who will know of them only by tradition, so the same principle should apply in the preparation of a history. The present generation will have passed away, but the future generations will have the same desire to study the acts of the former years which are possessed by us.

The peculiar manner in which the early documents were written with the quaint spelling and abundance of capital letters which preceded a general rule for their use has been retained. It should be borne in mind that this was not the result of ignorance on the part of the writers, but was the style then in use. No doubt the style of spelling in the time of Chaucer and Spencer would present the same difficulties to our forefathers which theirs does to us, and in one or two centuries those persons who examine the writings of the present day will probably find as marked a contrast as exists at present between the style now in use and that of a century ago. The English language of the time six centuries ago can hardly be recognized as the language of the present day and no one can predict with any certainty what its future may be.

My object in writing this history has been to instruct and entertain the readers. The work has been performed without expectation of pecuniary reward. The formation of new acquaintances, the study of the works of nature and the satisfaction to be derived from the knowledge that those who

study this history will be led to take a deeper interest in the early days of the town's existence has provided ample compensation. The amount I receive from the town I consider a gratuity and wish to extend to my fellow-citizens my thanks for the gift. After twenty-eight years of study and preparation this history is now placed before the public, and it is my earnest desire that the lessons of patience, patriotism and good citizenship taught us by our ancestors may not be forgotten, but may be transmitted from generation to generation.

Silas R. Coburn.

DRACUT, MASS.,
January 1, 1922.

CHAPTER I

SETTLEMENT OF DRACUT OR AUGUMTOOCOOKE

DRACUT is located in Middlesex County, in the State of Massachusetts. It is in latitude 42° 41′ and longitude 71° 19′. It is a border town on the line between New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and is about 34 miles west of the Atlantic ocean at the mouth of the Merrimack river, 27 miles north of Boston and 25 miles south of Manchester, N. H. It is bounded north by Pelham, N. H., east by Methuen, south by the Merrimack river and Lowell, and west by Tyngsboro. These are the boundaries at the present time although greatly changed from those which existed at the time of the incorporation of the town. The establishment of the Province line and annexations of portions of the town to Lowell and Tyngsboro have contracted its area. When first laid out, it was bounded on the west and northwest by Dunstable; on the north and east by wilderness land; and south and southwest by the Merrimack river. According to the surveyor's report, it contained 22,334 acres at the time of laying out, which, from the liberal measurements of those times, was probably nearer 30,000. In 1832 the area was stated to be 15,673 acres, and in 1914 it was 12,530 acres.

The population of the town as shown by census of Province, United States and state is given:

1765	Prov.	1173	
1776	Prov.	1173	
1790	U. S.	1217	
1860	U. S.	1881	
1865	State	1905	
1870	U. S.	2078	
1800	U. S.	1274	
1810	U. S.	1301	
1820	U. S.	1407	
1830	U. S.	1615	
1840	U. S.	2188	
1850	U. S.	3503	
1855	State	1966	
1875	State	1116	
1880	U. S.	1595	
1885	State	1927	
1890	U. S.	1996	
1895	State	2443	
1900	U. S.	3253	

The early immigrants settled first upon or near the seacoast, but being people of courage and enterprise, they gradually occupied the wilderness which was unbroken to the settlements in Canada. Chelmsford, which may be considered the mother town of Dracut, was incorporated May 29, 1655, nearly half a century before this town had a legal existence. The Merrimack river was so much of a barrier to the further progress of settlement that a long interval elapsed between the dates of incorporation of these two towns. Until Dracut became a town the people who lived on the north side of the river were considered as belonging to Chelmsford. We quote from an old record: "Chelmsford also held jurisdiction over the settlements upon the north of the Merrimack at what is now Dracut and the part of Lowell which lies north of the river." The people voted and paid taxes in Chelmsford and depended upon that town for protection. This relation was confirmed by the Court in 1667, and to show that the citizens in those days were careful about the expenditure of money and would not pay taxes until the legality of such payment was assured, and it was an obligation to do so, the quaint order of the court is given:

"Farmes abt Merrimac to belong to Middlesex Courts | Vpon information of sundry ffarmes erected above Merrimack River whose inhabitants pretend their sayd farmes to be out of the County of Middlesex and possibly be not contayned in any county, it is therefore ordered by this Court & the authority thereof that all and every the inhabitants of such farmes as there are or shall be improved, in all points, have their dependencies vpon & performe services & beare chardges wth the sayd towne of Chelmsford & that the sajd ffarmes repair to the courts of Middlesex for Justice & all till this Court take further orders, any lawe or custome notwthstanding Oct. 7, 1667."

Major Henchman, who had a garrison house on the Chelmsford side of the river and who had charge of the defence of the vicinity, in a letter to the Governor and Council dated July 12, 1669, says: "Wherefore, Honorable and Worshipful I judge it

highly needful and necessary that we have relief, and that speedily of about twenty men or more for the repulsing of the enemy and guarding some outplaces, which are considerable on each side of the Merrimac, as Messrs. Howard, Varnum, Coburn &c who must otherwise come in to us, and leave what they have to the enemy, or be exposed to the merciless cruelty of bloody and barbarous men.'' [Fox's ''History of Dunstable.''] The Chelmsford records give the names of six tax payers on the north side of the river in 1671, viz., Samuel Varnum, John Coborn, Robert Coborn, Edward Coburn Sr., Edward Coburn, Jr., and Thomas Coborn.

The history of Dracut before its incorporation is meagre. Some of the properties changed owners, but many were held in possession by the Colburns, Varnums and Richardsons. Their families had increased and they began to desire a town organization, and a settled ministry. Joining with four non-resident owners, they presented a petition to the General Court to be laid out for a township.

The petition for incorporation is as follows:

''To the Hon. Council & Representatives of his Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England in General Court assembled February 1701.

''The petition of Samuel Sewall Esq., Benjamin Walker, John Hunt & Jonathan Belcher, proprietors of part of the Tract of Land called Dracut beyond Chelmsford in the County of Middlesex on the North Side of Merrimack River and of Samuel Varnum, Thomas Varnum, John Varnum, Joseph Varnum, Thomas Colburne, Daniel Coolburn, Daniel Colburn, Jr., Ezra Colburn, Joseph Colburn, John Colburn, Robert Colburn, William Colburne, James Richardson, Ezekiel Richardson, Benja. Richardson, Joseph Richardson, Ezra Colburn, Jr., Josiah Colburne, Hannah Colburn, widow, Elizabeth Colburne, widow, & Hannah Richardson, Inhabitants and Proprietors of the said Tract of Land called Dracut,

Humbly showeth

That the said Tract of Land (which adjoins to Dunstable on the west and northwest & runs seven miles Eastward upon the

River from Dunstable line and and six miles northward from the River) lyes very commodious for a Township & hath about twenty families already settled thereupon in which are about Eighty Souls & Forasmuch as the making said place a Tounship will not only be a great Encouragement to the Inhabitants thereof & be the means for a settlement of the Ministry among them (for the benefit of which they are now obliged to go to Chelmsford, which is a great difficulty & cannot be attended by their children & several others by reason of the distance thereof) but will also be of considerable benefit to the Publick, and be a great strengthening of the Frontier parts by reason of the people which will be desirous to settle at said place when made a Township because of the convenient situation thereof.

Your Petitioners humbly pray that by the grant of this Hon.ble Court, the Tract of land aforesaid may be made a Township, and that the Inhabitants, which are or shall settle thereupon, may have and enjoy all Libertys, Privileges & Immunities as the Inhabitants of other Towns within this Province have & do enjoy. And your Pet,rs as in duty bound shall ever pray etc. In the House of Representatives Febr 25 1701. Read in the House of Representatives February 25 1701. *Resolved,* That the prayer of the Petition on the other side be granted and the Tract of Land therein described be made a Township & called by the name of Dracut, provided that the Bounds Specified Intrench not upon any former Grant as Grants of Townships. That the Inhabitants of Land assist in the maintenance of the ministry at the Town of Chelmsford as at present they do, until they are provided with a Minister as the Law directs. That a General Plot of said Land (taken by a sworn surveyor) be laid before this Court at their Session beginning in May next. And that if any Land shall happen to fall within the Bounds aforesaid that hath not been heretofore granted it shall be reserved to be disposed of by this government.

Sent up by concurrence
NEHEMIAH JEWETT, Speaker."

In the above petition, the first four persons mentioned were not settlers or residents of the territory. Hunt and Walker were sons-in-law of Alcock, who purchased the Western half

of the Russell grant, which is now the Navy Yard village and the region about Hovey square, and Belcher owned the eastern half which included the Center and Centralville. Samuel Varnum was the first of the name to settle here and Thomas, John and Joseph were his sons. The name of Edward Colburn, who came from Ipswich and who was the progenitor of the Colburns and Coburns does not appear on the petition, although he was living at the time, as his death occurred in 1712, but his sons, Thomas, Daniel, Ezra, Joseph and Robert were signers. The other Colburns, including John, must have been grandsons of Edward, as his son John died in 1695.

The Richardsons were allied with the Colburns by marriage and had settled here soon after the Coburns and Varnums had arrived. The petition was favorably received and the report is as follows:

"At a Great and General Court or Assembly of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England begun and held in Boston upon Wednesday the 28th day of May 1700 and continued by several prorogations & adjournments unto Wednesday the 18th day of February and then met Thursday Feb 26 1701. A petition of Samuel Sewall Esq., Ephraim Hunt Esq., Benjamin Walker, John Hunt & Jonathan Belcher Proprietors of part of the tract of land called Dracut, beyond Chelmsford, in the County of Middlesex on the North side of Merrimack River & of Samuel Varnum & several others inhabitants and proprietors of the said tract of land, praying that the said tract of land which adjoins Dunstable on the West and Northwest & runs seven miles Eastward upon the River from Dunstable line and six miles Northward from the River may be made a Township & that the Inhabitants which are, or shall settle thereupon, may have and enjoy all liberties, priveleges & immunities as the Inhabitants of other towns within the Province have and do enjoy, was sent up from the House of Representatives with a resolve passed by that House thereupon in the words following (being a repetition of the foregoing resolve passed in the House of Representatives) In Council 26th of February 1701, Read, Concurred with and consented to.

Coppy examined. J. WILLARD Sec'ry."

It is proper in this place to state the difference between the old and new style of dating. The legal year at this time commenced in March, February being reckoned as the twelfth month. The new style which commenced the year with January was in use upon the continent of Europe, but was not legally adopted by Great Britain and her colonies until 1752, although used to some extent. A careful inspection of the Court records will show the old style of dating. Some writers have failed to bear the difference in mind and have given the date of incorporation which is not in accordance with the present style. On the 28th of February the Court adjourned to the following April, the opening of the session bearing the date of April 9, 1702. With the resolve the petitioners were ordered to present a plot or map of the township "in May next." This order was obeyed and the surveyors' report with the plot bears date "ye 26: 3 mo. 1702," showing the Old Style as before. In accordance therefore with the present new style, commencing the year with the first of January, the correct date of the incorporation of Dracut is February 26, 1702. The town seal bears the date, 1701.

The survey ordered by the General Court was made by Jonathan Danforth, whose services as surveyor were in demand throughout a large part of the County. The report is as follows:

"26:3 mo. 1702 According to the order of the Honble Genl. Court of last year there is laid out to the Inhabitants and proprietors of Dracutt, a tract of land for a township on the Northside of Merrimack River, it begins at an Island lying in Merrimack River called Wekasook and takes about half of it, and is bounded by Capt. Searlett and Dunstable line on the North West as far as Kimballs farme at Jerimies Hill which is about six miles in a crooked line, then it is bounded by Dunstable line on the west about 4 miles. It is bounded southerly by Merrimack River about 7 miles by a straight line from Wekasook where we began. The Southeast corner is a white oak marked with a D a little from the river and from thence it runs due North 6 miles, which line is near parallel with Dunstable line on that side. Then by a Northwest line it closeth to Dunstable line.

JONATHAN DANFORTH surveyor."

At this time the Province line had not been established, which, running through the town, caused all of the north part of the town to lie in New Hampshire and this was later, with some of the territory west of the brook at that time in Dunstable, incorporated with the name of Pelham. Jeremies Hill lies west of Beaver Brook between the Mammoth road and Hudson and is the next high hill north of Gumpus Hill and Gumpus pond.

The earliest recorded deed to land in what is now known as Dracut, Mass. This deed was made in 1664 and is one of the deeds, a copy of which is at the local court house, among those copied at such great labor and expense from the records at Cambridge.

"Articles of agreement made the 10th day of January in the yeare of our Lord according to the computaccon of England One Thousand Six hundred and sixty foure, betweene John Evered als. In. Web of Drawcutt, upon Merrimack in the County of Norfolke in New England gentleman, of the one party, and Richard Shatwell of Ipswich in the county of Essex, yeom. and Samuel Varnam of Ipswich aforesaid yeom. of the other pte witnesseth that the said John Evered als. Web. for and in consideration of the sume of foure hundred pounds of Lawful money of & in New England aforesaid to be payd to him the said John Web, his heyres, Executor admetrator & assignes in mann & forme following viz that is to say currant pay of New England aforesaid, two third pts of the vallue of the said sume of foure hundred pounds currant pay as aforesaid in wheate, mault, or pease, and the other third part of the vallew of ye said sume of foure hundred pounds aforesd and ye remainder of ye sd Sume of foure hundred pounds in beeffs, porke or Indians neery to be payd in equall pportions and in defect of the paymt of porke to be payd in wheate & maute and in defect of any of the said paymts or all the said paymts to be payd in marcchantable fish currant price of New England, for the full paymt and in sattisfaccon of the said foure hundred pounds aforesaid, to be payd and sattisfied at, in before or upon the dayes & times hereafter in and by these presents mentioned & reserved, that is to say one third pt thereof to be payd at, upon, or before the tenth day of

March wch shall be in the yeare of our Lord One Thousand six hundred and sixty-five, and the second third part thereofto be payd, at, upon, or before the tenth day of March wch shall be in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred and sixty and six and the other third part being the full remainder of the said paymt for ye paymt & sattisfaccon of the said sume of foure hundred pounds at upon or before the tenth day of March wch shall be in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred and Sixty seaven. Hath demised, given, granted, bargained, sold, Aliened, Enfeoffed & confirmed and by these presents doth demise, give, grant, bargaine, sell, alien, enfeoffe & confirme unto them the said Richard Shatshwel and Samuel Varnum, the moyty or one halft of the farme of Drawcutt aforesaid of upland, meadow & pasture to be equally divided and also the feild below the barne, now in tillage arrable land with the appurtenances, except and always reserved out of the demised, grant, bargain and sale to him, the said John Web, his hyres, excecutors & assignes all the feild arrable land and tillage together with all & all manner of houses, barnes, structures, edifices & buildings whatsoever with the appurtenances and also the garden, the feild mentioned to be called the upper feild and also reserved three acres of the said lower feild aforesaid below the log fence neere the barne together with that parcell of land fenced in with the said log fence, neere the barne aforesaid with the appurtenances the said moyty or one halfe of the aforesaid upland to be equally divided meadow and Pasture to be lane out and equally divided at both the ends of the said farme, that is to say at the east end and west end, that is to say to by on both sides of the said John Web Proporccon moyty or one half of the lands of the said farme, the true intent and meaning hereof is that the moyty or one halfe of the said land so demised & sold is to contene by estimation Eleven hundred acres at least, to be equally divided as aforesaid, one hundred and acres of the pcell of Land called Draw meadow with the upland belonging to it to be part of the said Eleven hundred acres to have and to hold the said Lands and premises so bargained & sold unto them the said Richard Shatswell and Samuel Varnam, their heyres, Excecutors & Assignes forever to enure to the sole & only propper use and behooffe of them the said Richard Shatswell and Samuel Varnam

their heyres, Excecutors & assignes forever, and to no other use behooffe, intent or purpose whatsoever. In witness whereof the said partyes to these presents above mentioned have hereunto put their hands & Seals the day and yeare first above written. Mem. before the sealing and delivce hereof Mary Evered als. Web the none wife of the said John Web, hath by these presents covenanted and granted to joyne with the said John Web in the bargaine & Sale of the said land & premises as witness her hand and sale, hereunto set and subscribed.

In the presence of viz.

HUGH STONE.

HEN NELSON.

JNO. EVERED als. Web and a seal.

RICHARD SHATSWELL and a seal.

SAMUEL VARNAM and a seal."

ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES
By Edwin M. Currier

It is in many instances difficult or impossible to apply an old plan to a modern map with satisfactory results. Measurements were far more liberal than indicated on paper. "The seven miles in a strait line" was practically eight or about ten, measuring by the curves of the river. What allowance was made for the variation of the compass is not stated, or if they allowed any. The actual limits of the township are to be ascertained by other data.

The east line has never been changed save as cut off at the north by the new province line of 1741. The west line included about one half of Wekasook or Tyngs Island. From Wekasook, or Island brook as the eastern channel of the river was called, the line ran about a mile, in a northeasterly course to its first angle, now indicated by a stone post on the north side of Bear meadow. In the survey of town bounds in Middlesex county in 1907 this is the one called Corner 1, Lowell-Tyngsboro. There is little doubt that this mile line was the bound between the military grant, owned by Capt. John Webb, and a grant to Richard Dummer and sold to Samuel Scarlet lying up on the river in what is now Tyngsboro.

From Corner 1 the old line ran some thirty degrees eastward of the north about a third of a mile to a corner now marked by a stone post and called Corner 5, Dracut-Tyngsboro, on the survey map before mentioned. This post stands on the east side of Trotting Park road, a short distance south of the old trotting park and eastward by Mud pond or Little Mascuppic. The locality was called "Bear Meadow Plain." From this point northward to the state line, the western bounds of the town have never been changed as far as known. The writer has examined five or six different plans, showing the old western boundaries, but varying somewhat one from another. While there may be errors in the foregoing description he feels reasonably sure of its substantial correctness.

By resolve of the General Court, April 22, 1755, the estates of Abraham, Thomas and John Littlehale were, on their petition, annexed to the town of Dunstable. The new line commenced at the mouth of Scarlet's brook and followed the brook up about one fourth of a mile. Then from the brook it ran about twenty-two degrees eastward of the north one hundred and eighty-six rods to the old corner bound north of Bear meadow (corner 1 before mentioned) and about one hundred and forty rods from the roadstone on Varnum avenue. From this angle, by five courses, the old angle on Bear Meadow Plain is reached (corner 5). By reference to the map the singular projection of Tyngsboro territory into the town of Dracut is noticeable. The granite posts at the corners were placed in 1822, as chiseled on them.

A perambulation by the selectmen of the two towns Oct. 6, 1773, mentions both the old and new bounds; "Commencing at the mouth of Scarlet brook and following up said brook to a stake and stones, then an old stump with stones by it, near a meadow, then cross the said meadow & not finding the bounds there, then to a large pine tree marked, then to a stake and stones, at the Corner of Samuel Colburns Willow House so called, then to two Black oak trees marked, then to a small Birch tree marked, then to a large crotched pine tree marked standing in Dunstable old line." After perambulating the rest of the old line to the state boundary, "We renewed the old bounds upon the old line between the said towns. Beginning at the river upon Wekasook Island at a white oak tree marked D. D. then to a heap

of stones where is a tree fallen down marked D. D. then to a dry pine tree marked D. D. then not finding any more bounds till we come to the crotched pine above mentioned; the above said bounds first upon the new line then upon the old we mutually agree to be the bounds between the two towns." Just what was the structure called "Samuel Colburns Willow House" we are not informed; but apparently it stood near the north east corner of the territory annexed to Dunstable. The corner post is "forty nine feet distant from an angle in the wall at the edge of Bushy Meadow." (Survey of 1907.) The east line of Dracut, nominally six miles, was certainly seven or more, and must have reached within half of a mile of the southern end of Canobie Lake.

The perambulation of the Dracut-Dunstable line in December, 1723, begins, "At a pine tree on the north side of Beaver brook in sight of said brook, being marked and lettered with F., it being fallen down we have laid stones about it; from thence running southward by the old marked trees, many of them lettered D. D. till we come near to a place called the Stone Dam, then not finding the old bounds we aGreed both parties to mark a pine which stands on the east side of Beaver Brook 4 rods from said Dam * * * * from said bound tree running southward to a pine tree marked and lettered D. D. So running to a pine marked and stones about it near to a pine tree which is called the South East angle of Henry Kimbals farm, and from said pine tree we run the old bounds to Long Pond." Stone Dam was a natural dam across Beaver brook where Butlers mills (now Atwood's) at North Pelham, now stands.

Further data are given by a perambulation, December 15, 1733, omitting the numerous white oaks, black oaks, pine, etc., mentioned as bound marks: "Began at the Northern corner of Dracut next to Methuen, so went on the North West line of Dracut crossing a meadow to a pine tree * * * * then a maple with a heap of stones on the southerly side of Goldings Pond otherwise called Cobets Pond crossing said pond, then a red oak, then crossing Goldings Brook, then a pond crossing Drye pond * * * * ; then a west line, a white oak near Beaver Brook, then several pines lettered D. D. to Beaver Brook or Stone Dam to a pine ye east side * * * * then a heap of stones on

the end of Round Hill on the west side of the road, we did not show the line to the tree lettered F." The pine tree marked F near Beaver Brook is mentioned by Jonathan Danforth in his survey of Dunstable in 1674. It cannot be located with accuracy. According to Mr. Kimball Webster (History of Hudson, N. H.) it later became the "northwest corner of Dracut, the northeast corner of Nottingham and the southeast corner of Litchfield, as these towns were chartered by Massachusetts; notwithstanding that the south line of Londonderry, as chartered by New Hampshire was two miles south of the aforesaid ancient bound pine." Mr. Kimball Webster locates this bound as a short distance north of the point where the Worcester division of the Boston and Maine Railroad crosses Beaver Brook and on the northwest side of the brook.

In this connection it may be stated that Methuen as chartered by Massachusetts, 1725, covered a part of the territory north of Dracut occupied by Londonderry settlers. The charter of the latter, 1722, gave them as far south as the present Pelham-Windham line, although by their deed from Wheelwright, 1719, they could claim only to the old line of Dracut. After this territory was set off to New Hampshire, 1741, of course the Londonderry charter was sustained. From the foregoing data a plan may be drawn showing approximately the bounds of the northern part of Dracut. Placing the northeasterly corner of the town about one half mile south of Canobie Lake and a short distance eastward of the Salem-Windham line, a northwesterly line will cross the southerly line of Corbett's pond, then Goulding's brook and reach the point designated as Dracut northwest corner about three fourths of a mile southwesterly from Windham depot. Thence from the data quoted, the line must run four rods east of the Stone Dam and over the east side of Round Hill a little west of Mammoth road. The hill is about one fourth of a mile westerly of Hutchinson's bridge. From Round Hill the line continues on the same course, doubtless intended for a magnetic north and south to the "Southeast angle of Henry Kimball's farm," a little west of Beaver brook. From all attainable data this "southeast angle" was some quarter of a mile southeast of the farm buildings on the old Darius Stickney place, and near the electric road. From this angle the line ran in a south-

westerly course to the north end of Long pond touching the pond on the northwesterly side as shown by the old map of 1702. It is understood to have been the southerly boundary of the old Stickney farm, eastward of the Stickney road. It would cross the Dr. Batchelder place, now the residence of Mr. Frank Stickney, north of the house, and cross the Tenney road eastward of the Edmund Tenney house. Thence crossing Broad Meadow, southward of the house, it would reach the Mammoth road near the old Gumpus burying ground.*

By the adjustment of the boundary line between New Hampshire and Massachusetts, 1741, nearly one half of the original area of Dracut came under the jurisdiction of New Hampshire. That portion lying north of the Londonderry line became part of the new town of Windham chartered 1742. It had been considered by Dracut as a part of the Reserved lands and lots had been laid out to some of the proprietors, though it is not probable that any Dracut people had settled there. In 1746 that part of old Dracut between Windham and the new province line, with a section of Nottingham on the west and a small portion of former Methuen territory on the east, was incorporated as the town of Pelham. The present northeast corner of the town at the angle formed by the junction of the Dracut-Methuen line with the state line is on a hill about one third of a mile south of North or Whites Pond known as Poplar or Ayres hill. Reference has been made to this hill as being a double hill and it is between the two summits where the boundary monument is erected, lettered on the north side P 1890 and on the south side D & M 1890.

In 1702 a petition was presented to the state authorities, the substance of which is found in the reply of the Council:

*A singular error occurs in the record of the laying out of Dunstable 1674: "From the pine tree marked F to the angle of Kimballs farm the line is said to run two degrees west of south. From the same angle to Long pond it ran 'two degrees and a *quarter* westward of the south' as it is stated a difference of only a *quarter of a degree* which is obviously wrong. Probably 'south west' was intended instead of 'south.' Fox seems to have been misled by this error in drawing the map for his 'History of Dunstable.'"

"COUNCIL RECORDS Vol. III p. 316

AT A COUNCIL held at the Council Chamber in Boston upon Saturday the 30th of May 1702. Upon reading the Petition of the Inhabitants of the Town of Dracut therein setting forth that they are obliged to attend military Exercises at Chelmsford the next adjoining Town which being several miles from their houses is not only a great hardship to them, but doth much expose their wives and children to the Insolency of the Indians and put them in fear, praying to be excused from that difficulty and that some suitable person among themselves may be commissioned to train and instruct them in Military Exercises. Ordered. That the Petitioners be discharged from Attending of Military exercises in the Town of Chelmsford, and that Jonathan Tyng Esqr. major of the regiment whereto they belong do appoint one of themselves to exercise them upon the place until further order. Which order was signed by the major part of the Council.

EDW. RAWSON, Secretary."

After the incorporation of the town the people continued to act with Chelmsford in religious matters until the relations were severed by the following action of the General Court: "Janawary the : 14 : 1705-6. It was voated that Draw Cut shall not voate In Chelmsford." The descendants of the first settlers realized the hardships which their ancestors endured to settle the new town of Dracut and generally resisted all efforts for a change in its boundary lines.

In 1774 there was inserted in the town warrant an article "to see if the town will vote off the easterly part as far up Merrimac river as to a white oak on the bank of the river 10 rods east of Ephraim Richardsons Brook to the Province line 40 perches west of George Burns' house in order to join with the westerly part of Methuen for a town." The line would have been east of the Jonathan Fox house and near the Warren Richardson house which was east of Marsh Hill on Burns hill. The town refused to consent to the proposition. In 1788 the inhabitants of that part of Dunstable east of the river petitioned the General Court to be annexed to Dracut. The latter town at a

meeting held April 7, 1788 consented to receive them. The Court however did not favor the petition and no further action was taken.

About the year 1790 a petition was received requesting the town to set off the west portion between a line drawn from Merrimack river at the "Sor Pit"* northward to the station tree on Parker Varnums land, with Merrimack river on the west. The object was to have Dracut, parts of Chelmsford and Tyngsboro join to be incorporated as a new town. The line would run from a point in the river east of the mouth of Beaver brook to the boundary pine monument on the State line. The town refused to agree to the partition of its territory.

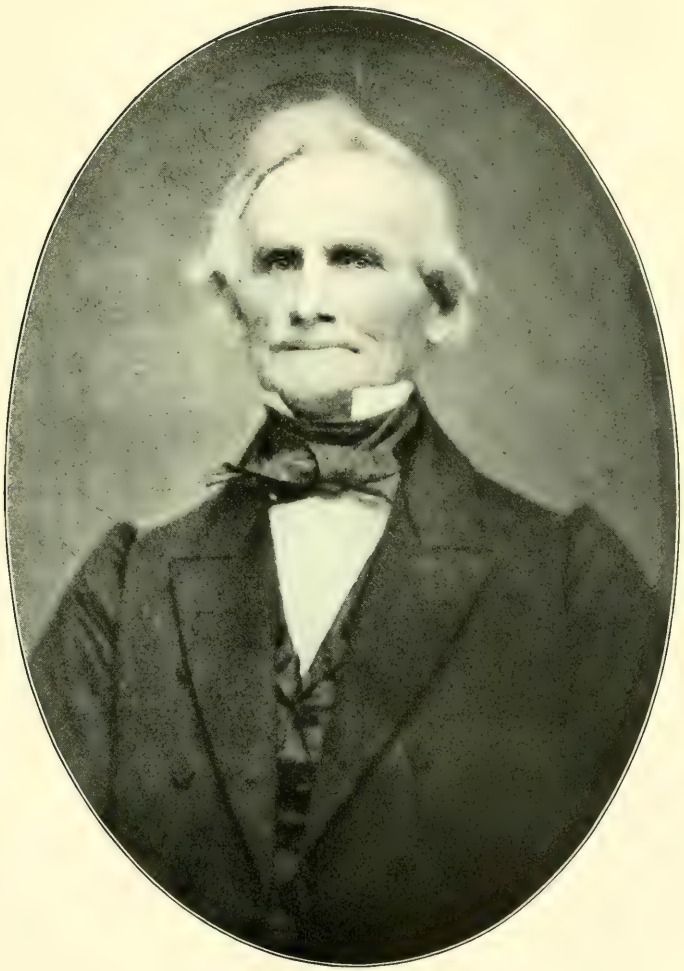
In 1805 the town was invited to become a part of New Hampshire but again declined to change. The boundary lines remained undisturbed for many years after the establishment of the state line in 1741, except for the change of bounds at the west end in 1755 as before mentioned, but the Pawtucket falls with their available power produced remarkable changes in a short period of time. If the river had been unobstructed by the falls, Chelmsford and Dracut would have retained their condition as towns in which the chief business was farming, and Lowell would never have existed. The population, which was greatly increased by the erection of the factories required a large territory on which to reside. There were no street cars and when the land on the Chelmsford side of the river was occupied as far as it was convenient for the operatives to reside while employed in the mills, the land in Centralville was in demand for homes. In 1844 Centralville was so thickly settled that the roads on the hill leading up from Bridge street were laid out by the town and accepted. The village was beginning to assume the conditions of a city and demanded a fire engine and the formation of an engine company. Although in need of fire protection the project was not favorably received and the article relating to it, which had been inserted in the warrant, was dismissed.

In 1851 the inhabitants of the village petitioned the Legislature to be annexed to Lowell. The petition was granted and the

*The Saw pit was a deep hole in the river in the vicinity of the mouth of Beaver brook.

lines defined as follows: "So much of the town of Dracut in the County of Middlesex as is commonly called Centralville thus bounded to wit, Beginning at the thread of Merrimack river near the foot of Hunts falls opposite the southeast corner of the land of the Proprietors of the Locks and Canals on Merrimack river thence running north 19° 30′ west to the margin of said river at said southeast corner bound thence in the same course northerly 3827 feet to the northerly side of the new County road leading from said county to Methuen thence North 89° west 5270 feet to the margin of said river near the end of the wall opposite or near the head of Long Island thence westerly in a direct line to the thread of said river, then down said river by the thread thereof to the point of beginning."

Contrary to the usual course, the town had given its consent to the division, January 20, 1851, by a vote of Yes, 126, No, 70. The east line of the part annexed to Lowell began at the river opposite a group of islands called Abbott's islands and from that point it ran to the northeast corner bound on Methuen street nearly one fourth of a mile eastward from Beacon street. From this corner it ran in a straight course reaching Bridge street, a few rods south of Richardson street, which it crossed diagonally to Hildreth street at the angle immediately south of the house formerly owned by Warner Coburn. It reached Lakeview Avenue near its junction with Aiken avenue. The original size and shape of Long Island has been changed as that portion of the river between the avenue and the island has been filled and Aiken street now crosses it while the northerly end of Aiken street bridge rests on the island. The introduction of street cars again brought changes and was a further factor in the expansion of the city and the line was established which embraced more of Dracut territory. This change was made in 1874. The line extended from the northeast corner which was the original bound in 1851, which was on Methuen street and was carried over the top of the hill east of and near the high service reservoir and through the Thomas Fay buildings to the present northeast corner on Willard Street south of the former town farm house. From this point running in a straight line it crosses Bridge street in the hollow below Dracut centre, and Hildreth street a few rods below Hovey square reaching Lakeview avenue near Bach-



CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FOX

(See Page 387)

man street. It crosses Riverside street between the tenement houses which were built by the Merrimack Woolen Co. and reaches the Mammoth road at Ledge hill continuing westward reaching the river at Scarlet's brook. In 1879 several hundred acres at the extreme southwesterly corner of the town were annexed to Lowell.

The town has not favored these annexations and in 1873 an attempt was made to prevent the loss of more territory. A committee was appointed to attend to the interests of the town and if not successful in defeating the arrangement they were to advocate the annexation of the whole town. But the division was made and the lines drawn as stated. In 1904 another attempt was made to annex more territory, which would include the Navy Yard village, Hovey square and Dracut centre, but it was strongly opposed and the project failed.

The name Draycot is of ancient British origin, and in use long before the Roman conquest of B. C. 54. Until that time the country was occupied by many savage tribes of Britons who were almost continually at war with one another. Julius Cæsar with his Roman soldiers were masters of the known world. They had subdued Gaul and the white cliffs of England across the channel seemed to reveal more countries to be conquered. The Britons were a courageous people and only yielded to the Romans after many years of fighting. Throughout the period of the Roman occupation, of the raid of the Picts and Scots, of the occupancy by the Saxons and Normans, the name survived, being spelled according to the manner of the language of the conquerors. This accounts in a measure for the different ways of spelling with which we meet in the ancient parish records. After the Norman conquest (1066) surnames became common and the name of the locality where a nobleman dwelt, or had his estate was often adopted for his surname. Among the followers of William the Conqueror was one of the Fitzanculph family called Lord Dracota. This Fitzanculph was afterward Baron Malbans and brother to Philip, whose son was Lord Dracota. This is recorded in the early English record books and shows the existence of the name at a very early date.

In 1322 the Scotch invaded England, and an order was given in Draycot and other towns for the people to assemble and be

ready to follow their feudal lords to war. This order was read in Draycot church. In 1086 by order of William the Conqueror the Domesday Book was written in which was recorded the survey of a great part of the landed estate of England. The name in this old book is spelled in different ways according to the locality of the town. Draycott in Cheddar, Somersetshire, was spelled in the record to which reference was made, Dracota, also Dracotta. The Saxon owner was Godewinns or Goodwin. Draycot in Lymington, near Bath, and Wells, Somersetshire, was spelled Dracota, the Saxon owner being Alwe. Draycot-Foliot and Draycot-Cerne, the last being in Wiltshire were respectively Dracote, Saxon owner Levenot, and Draicote, Saxon owner Edric. A brief mention of an early charter may be of interest to lovers of ancient history.

DRAYCOTE CHARTER

"William Malbant grants to Hugh, son of Nicholas de Draycot and his heirs Draycote, Cunshall, Newton and Leye (Leigh) and also a salting (a saltmarsh) in Wich-Cheshire, Circa A. D. 1160."

In Staffordshire, William Malbane held, with other places, Draycote-le-Moors. The name Draycot is a corruption of Tre-Cord which means town in the woods. Tre or Dor meaning town and cord meaning woods.

As Dracut in America bore an honorable part in the struggle for liberty and freedom from British oppression in the Revolution, so Draycot in Staffordshire, more than 130 years previous to the time of securing our independence, furnished soldiers who fought for Charles I against Cromwell in 1664, but in this case they were on the side that met defeat. Richard Draycot, the name having become a family name, retired to Paynerley Hall, which he fortified, as was the custom, and surrounded it with three moats; but resistance though stubborn, was in vain, the castle was demolished and when peace was restored a brick building was erected on the site.

Like many other proper names the name in this country may be found spelled in different ways. Drawcutt was a common way of spelling the name in the early days, while we find in

the records of Chelmsford the name is spelled Draw Cut. In a transference of property under date of 1665 the name is recorded as Drawcutt alias Augumtoocook. The substance of the transfer will appear in the chapter on Indian History. The earliest mention of the name as applied to this town is in a transfer from John Evered alias Webb to Samuel Varnum and Richard Shatswell "1100 acres in Drawcutt on Merrimack River," January 10, 1665.

CHAPTER II

PERIOD OF THE GLACIAL MOVEMENT

AS we study the formation of the earth with its hills and valleys, its rocks and streams, too often we are led to think that its present condition has existed since the creation.

But we are taught that since the planet called the Earth assumed its present globular form there have been stupendous changes. Mountain ranges have been upheaved, continents have been submerged by the ocean, the land, now the site of large cities, was once the bed of the sea, and the changes that are taking place are continuous, but so slight as the centuries pass away, that in the short space of time allotted to us as individuals we are unable to detect them. Uncounted ages have passed away since the light of the sun shone through the firemist that filled the space which we now call the solar system and the earth began to take its form. Man takes note only of days, months or moons, years and centuries.

Of the vast periods which he calls ages, cycles and eons he has but faint conception. Scientists have divided geologic time into five great eras or periods. The earliest is the Archæzoic, then in their order, the Proterozoic, Paleozoic, Mesozoic and the present or Cenozoic. During the last named period, and before the advent of man, came the age of glaciers, of which this chapter treats. To explain the meaning of the glacial period we may consider it as one long winter of thousands of years, during which time the ice and snow accumulated until it covered nearly all of the northern hemisphere. Exact data relating to depth cannot be obtained, some estimating the thickness of the ice at 300 feet, others placing it at half a mile.

This great ice sheet travelled slowly south and after the passing of this age-long winter, thousands of years of gradually increasing warmth succeeded and the present condition was the result. In proof of the existence in the middle states of a former tropical climate we may refer to the immense coal formations

produced by the submergence of the land and the consequent burial of gigantic ferns and tropical trees which could have flourished only in a tropical heat. We quote from the Century Book of facts: "Geologists are generally agreed that long before the advent of man, parts of the northern hemisphere were elevated several thousand feet higher than they are at present, causing the cold of the Arctic Zone to extend far southward into present temperate regions and that a vast glacier rising in the vicinity of Hudson Bay covered the American Continent north of the 40th parallel. The loose soil that covers so large a part of the surface of the northern continent to a depth varying from 30 to 100 feet over which lie the deposits of later ages, is considered by geologists the effects of glaciers that, in the quarternary or latest geological age, slowly moved southward across the country."

Having in a general way stated the facts relating to the glacial period, we will consider first the effect of the changes produced in the ponds and rivers.

The Merrimack River has been a great factor in the development of the town of Dracut. On account of its existence on the south and west, the population of the town has increased by the establishment of factories in Lowell, by the founding of cities of Lowell and Lawrence which afford a market for farm produce, and by providing an outlet for the brooks on whose falls are placed the mills which add to the prosperity of the town.

During the early part of the last century the river provided for the transportation, by rafts, of lumber to the ship building yards of Newburyport, and, until a dam was built across the river, the fish that came up the river at certain seasons of the year assisted materially in providing food for the family and as a medium of exchange for the necessaries of life. Before the glacial period the river flowed in a southerly course, reaching the sea near Boston. The Middlesex canal when built, followed the course of the river and while excavations were being made, indications of the river bed of pre-glacial times were found.

In Prof. Shaler's "Aspects of the Earth" we read: "During the last glacial period the old river valleys were to a great degree worn away and the remaining portion of these troughs

was to a considerable extent buried beneath a thick coating of debris which the ice had worn from the surface of the land and dropped upon that surface as it retreated. The result is that in all countries which were affected by the last glacial period the river valleys have only here and there returned to their ancient beds. Ever since the ice went away they have been engaged in a struggle to restore their ruined ways. * * * We see a simple indication of this confusion of the old drainage, brought about by glacial action, in the vast number of lakes lodged within depressions of the surface in New England as well as in all parts of the glaciated district. We have only to compare the valley of such a stream as the James River which lies south of the glacial belt with a New England valley such as that of the Merrimack to see the importance of the effects accomplished by a glacial sheet on the river system. The valley of the James is entirely without lakes, every part of its area slopes downward toward the sea. In the valley of the Merrimack there are hundreds of these water basins. A very large part of its surface is occupied by lakes which owe their origin to irregularities of the surface produced by the last glacial period."

We also quote from Fox's "History of Dunstable": "The valleys of the Merrimack are of alluvial formation. That they have undergone great changes is very evident. Their general appearance, the shape of their basins, their outlets, their different levels and the stratified character of the soil, all show that at some remote period the greater portion of these valleys must have been covered with water in the form of lakes or large ponds. But whatever may have been their origin, it is evident that the valley of the Merrimack was once a succession of lakes, one ending at Pawtucket Falls and another at Amoskeag Falls, through whose rocky basins the waters at length burst their way and formed their present lower channel leaving their former beds dry."

There is no indication that the river above Lowell was materially deflected from its course, but there is abundant proof of the existence of one of these many lakes where Lowell and some parts of Dracut now exist. Fox only mentions two, but other writers call them a chain of lakes reaching far up into New Hampshire. As the river became obstructed, the hills about Dracut and vicinity caused a lake to be formed which gradually

rose until a depression in the surrounding ridge allowed it to overflow. This was some spot on Dracut heights near Indian Orchard or lower down at Deer jump. Gradually overflowing, it in time cut a new channel by way of what is now Lawrence and Haverhill, to the sea.

An examination of the river in the vicinity named will show the soil to consist of glacial drift. For centuries the overflow of the lake was counterbalanced by the supply received from the overflow of lakes at the north, but the bed of the river being composed of loose soil and no ledge being present, the channel increased in depth and consequently the water in the lake was gradually lowered until the present rocky bed was reached. The electric road from Lowell to Lawrence is constructed in an ancient bed of the river which may be seen in Dracut and Methuen. The former banks are supported a part of the distance by retaining walls. The marks of the high water of the lake were plainly visible on the rocks at the Fletcher Street Ledge until recently, when by excavations they were lost. The large boulders now lying in the river were left when the loose soil was washed away. A considerable area of the lake still remains and forms the pond above Aiken Street bridge. The ledge at Hunts falls below the mouth of the Concord River is an obstruction which prevents further drainage. All streams show evidences of having a larger volume of water than at present and the Merrimack is not an exception. An old river bank may be seen between the river and Lakeview Avenue. Much of this old bank has been removed but it can be traced opposite the Reed estate, while the old river birches growing between this bank and the present limits of the river are proof of the years that have passed away since its formation. The ponds which exist at the borders of the town owe their formation to the glacial period. They occupy the depressions of the land and their existence is due to the inflow of streams which are prevented from causing an overflow by drainage and evaporation.

We will consider secondly the effects of the glacial movement on the land. The changes in the contour of the land were as remarkable as those pertaining to the rivers and ponds. As the tremendous weight of the ice sheet moved south and passed over hills and mountain ranges, it carried along billions of tons

of earth and rocks. These immense boulders, enclosed in the ice, scraped the surface, levelling the hills and filling the streams and valleys. As it crossed ledges it plowed furrows in the rocks, which show the direction of the movement of the mighty mass. All glacial drift contains boulders, cobblestones and pebbles in a rounded form. This is caused by the rolling over and over of these stones and thus they lose their sharp angles.

In one of the New Hampshire towns may be seen a large rock from which a piece has been broken, while in Connecticut the broken part has been found. Butterfield's Rock in Windham, N. H., which is as large as a small cottage, and which lies upside down on a ledge which is composed of a different kind of stone, is a proof of the irresistible power of a glacier when in motion. In what is now the under part of this rock a large "pothole" may be seen. For many years the peculiar form of the hills and ridges of New England remained a mystery. When examined by Prof. Agassiz, he pronounced them to be the product of the glacial period.

Dracut abounds in evidences of the ice age. The movement of the ice tended to the levelling of hills and filling of valleys, and if the great ice sheet had receded in the manner in which it advanced, we should have level plains unbroken by valleys except where great masses of rock, which form the ledges, stood bare and desolate. But after centuries of grinding and scraping, the temperature of the air gradually rose and streams formed by the melting of ice began to cut channels in the mass. By the action of the water the more soluble matter was carried away, leaving sand, pebbles, gravel, boulders and whatever was insoluble, and when in course of time these rivers reached the ground, the sand and pebbles were deposited in ridges of different heights and lengths. These are called kames in Scotland, eskers in Ireland, and osars in Sweden. Their general direction is southerly, but not all directly north and south.

In east Dracut, a short distance north of the nickel mine, there may be seen an esker running from northwest to southeast about fifteen feet in height, with steep sides not unlike the roof of a house. It may be found, but not so well defined, on the north side of the road leading from Burns' Hill to Methuen and near the residence of Franklin C. Wilson. On the eastward of

the nickel mine hill this esker forms a V-shaped junction with another esker which comes from the direction of the Methuen line. From the junction, it pursues a course towards the river.

Another esker starts from near the site of the paper mill above Parker Avenue and at Meadow bridge is cut through by Beaver Brook, but on the south side of the stream it runs south near the Merrimack Woolen mills, forming the high hills which a few years ago could be seen as a bluff which was occupied by the buildings called New England. This ridge loses its identity before it reaches the outlet of Beaver Brook. Another esker starts at Meadow Bridge and taking a course parallel with the one last named is crossed by Pond Street and is very easily traced south of the cemetery and, following Riverside Street, is also lost before reaching the river. A fourth esker commences at New Boston cemetery and continuing in a southwesterly direction is joined by another in New Boston village lying northwest of Rockwood D. Coburn's house. These crossing the New Boston road are cut through by Lakeview Avenue at H. Jesse Coburn's house. South of this point Beaver Brook has cut a channel across it and it continues to the Old Meadow Road near its junction with the electric car track. At Ward's ledge it disappears, but reappears on the west side of the Mammoth road near Tolman Avenue. This ridge has been changed by the carting away of sand and gravel, leaving the rounded boulders in great heaps. It reaches Varnum Avenue near Brookside Street. It appears on the south side of the river near Rolfe Street and continues southerly.

The material comprising these eskers when screened is of excellent quality for mixing with lime or cement for building purposes, and these hills which have been undisturbed for centuries are fast disappearing. The coarser material is used largely by road builders. The rocks are so small that no blasting is required to prepare them for the crusher. There is quite a difference in the composition of the material of which these ridges are composed. Near Beaver Brook sand predominates, while as the vicinity of the river is reached the proportion of gravel and boulders increases. Near Pleasant and Riverside Streets there are large boulders which were imbedded in the sand which was deposited there centuries ago.

Eastward of the nickel mine on the farm of the late Theodore Parker are moraines. These are glacial debris, sometimes in ridges where the ice has plowed its way through or between hills and left sand, gravel and boulders on each side of its course, or again where the glacier has melted and leaves the mass in vast heaps known as terminal moraines. One of these reaches the river near Deer Jump.

The glacial deposit may take still another form known as drumlins. These are hills of circular or oval shape and are of earlier construction than the eskers. Huckleberry or Whortleberry Hill near Lake Mascuppic, and Poplar Hill near North Pond at the northeast corner of the town, are the two highest and largest drumlins in Dracut. Then Christian Hill, Town Farm Hill and Loon, or Malones Hill, rank next in size. At the southeastern part of the town, near the Lawrence electric car track there are remarkable specimens of these drumlins. Thy are conical and their sides are very steep. In the extreme eastern part there is a range of these hills reaching from the river to Pelham line.

Miss Harriet Rea of Lowell, who has given much study to local geology in an article published a few years ago, says: "Boston Harbor not only affords a delightful sail at this season of the year, but is a place of geological interest. How many have ever noticed the peculiar shape of its islands? Breeds Island, Apple Island, Deer Island, Long Island, Winthrop, Fort Warren, Fort Independence and others are all alike in their physical features. The outlines are oval. The trend of the islands is from northwest to southeast. There is a longer slope on the east than on the west side. They are beautiful in their soft, fresh verdure, but one instantly exclaims 'Why are they all made from the same pattern?' These islands are drumlins like our own Fort Hill, left by the glacier when the ice and cold retreated from Boston Harbor. During the glacial period * * * the ice like that of Greenland must have been of greath depth and took possession of this part of our country. Boston Harbor existed before the glacier, but the ice sheet filled it up. When a warmer climate returned and the ice began to melt and the streams to flow, masses of earth, glacial drift and gravel were left in the peculiar form now called drumlins. They are packed so hard

and solid that an engineer will tell you that he would about as soon cut the solid rock through as some of these formations. They never consist of rock like ordinary hills or mountains, but are always formed of glacial drift. Why or how such peculiar shapes come to exist is open to conjecture or research."

In the region west of the cross road from the Methuen road to the Varnum Cemetery, they are thickly strewn and of various sizes. From Dracut Center west to the Navy Yard Village, they are not noticeable. Above New Boston Village and reaching up into Pelham, there are large numbers of these drumlins. They present a peculiar appearance in that locality as they may be seen as circular hills of sand rising abruptly from the meadows and swamps. The largest of these are known as Captain Bill's island and the Gil island. They are more numerous in West Dracut, the most prominent being the one on which stands the Lowell General Hospital, now in Lowell. Huckleberry and Poplar hills, to which reference has been made, are called twin hills. They are formed in pairs having two summits. This feature has been observed by travellers in other parts of the country and is the result of a law of nature of which we are ignorant. Third, the effect of glacial action on the surface of the earth.

Prof. Shaler says: "One naturally asks what was the use of the engine set at work ages ago to grind, furrow and knead over as it were, the surface of the earth. We have our answer in the fertile soil which spreads over the temperate region of the globe. The glacier was God's great plow * * * The hard surface of the rocks was ground to powder; the elements of the soil were mingled in fair proportion with the more arid and unproductive districts, and a soil was prepared fit for agricultural uses of man."

The debris from the north which was deposited on the surface of the land contained much matter which was suitable for the subsoil and wherever so deposited may be found our most fertile fields. Eskers and drumlins have remained uncultivated as the richer elements were dissolved. The rich, black soil from which the grasses and plants derive their sustenance is the product of vegetable and animal matter, which has been deposited and has decayed since the glacial period. The tendency of the ice was to level all uneven surfaces. The height of the moun-

tains at the north was greatly reduced and their contents spread over the surface of the country. As it passed over Dracut and Tewksbury, it left the surface level. In proof of this there are the high banks of the Merrimack River between Centralville and the Methuen line. Before the drainage of the lake began, the chasm through which the river flows was a solid mass of glacial drift. The overflow of the rim of the bowl which formed the lake, and the action of the water of the river produced the present gorge. The only obstruction to this tremendous force was the solid ledges.

In Centralville just north of the Henry Reed estate there existed a ledge, the north side of which was precipitous and as the mass of ice and gravel moved south and reached this ledge the space on the north side was filled, forming the hill on which the First Congregational Church building stands and over which Orleans street has been constructed. The greater part of the Navy Yard Village was a deep valley which became filled with sand. Its depth is not known, as excavations thirty feet in depth have been made without reaching the preglacial surface. In 1862, when the wooden mill was demolished and the foundations of a new one were being prepared, it was necessary to drive piles into the ground to a great depth until the original bed rock was reached, as the glacial drift was unsuitable for foundations.

A stroll through any part of the town will reveal the fact that Dracut abounds in evidences of the ice age of many thousand years ago, but for this work a single walk must suffice. Starting at the little brook called Tanhouse brook which flows through the Navy Yard village and proceeding west the underlying ledge is thickly strewn with boulders unearthed by road builders and pipe layers. Descending by way of Waldo street the lake bed forms the low land about Parker Avenue. Continuing through a footpath on the bank above the Paper mill dam there may be seen a large rock deposited by glacial movement. Just before reaching Meadow bridge a large drumlin has been formed, while in the bed of the stream there are large boulders which were left when the lighter materials were carried to the ocean. On the south side of the stream are the eskers, one of which is known as Mayhill. Pond street has an abundance of glacial boulders of all sizes which may be known by their rounded

edges. On the right before reaching the car track at Moody street is a drumlin, while running in a northeasterly direction there were, until recently, long, high eskers, but they have nearly disappeared, carried away for commercial purposes. Proceeding west from the turnout at the electric road there are huge boulders resembling groups of elephants, many of them rent asunder by the presence of water in the seams which congealed and caused them to divide. Such manifestations as these are proof of the stupendous power of the movement of the ice centuries ago. No data has been discovered by which we can reckon the centuries which have passed since these masses were deposited. Geologists reckon the time to be between twenty thousand and fifty thousand years ago.

CHAPTER III

INDIAN HISTORY

Dracut at Pawtucket Falls

By Joseph M. Wilson

THE Indian history of Dracut at Pawtucket Falls all centers around Passaconaway, "The Child of the Bear," last chief of the Stone Age. Daniel Gookin, the Indian magistrate, writes that "The Ancient and Capital Seat" of the Merrimack Valley Indians was at Pawtucket Falls.

This site as evidenced by the stone implements and ornaments now in possession of the Lowell Historical Society, was where the Lowell Textile School now stands, for from this spot and the glacial drumlin, adjoining, used by the Indians as their fort, these relics were gathered by a descendant of the Varnums.

We first hear of Passaconaway in history in 1627. Thomas Morton, being in this country at this time, thus writes of him in his "New English Canaan": "Papasiquineo the Sachem or Sagamore of the territories near Merrimack River, a man of the best note in all those parts (and as my countryman, Mr. Wood, declares in his prospect) a great nigromancer. That Sachem or Sagamore is a Powah of greate estimation amongst all kinde of Salvages then hee at their Revels (which is the time when a greate company of Salvages meete from severall partes of the Countre in amity with the neighbors) hath advanced his honor in his feats or jugling tricks to the admiration of the spectators whom hee endeavored to persuade that hee would go under the water to the further side of the river to broade for any man to undertake with a breath which thing he performed by swimming over and deluding the company with casting a mist before their eyes that see him enter in and come out; but no part of the way hee has bin seene; likewise by our English in the heat of all summer to make Ice in a bowl of faire water first having the water set before him hath begun his incantation according to

their usual accustom and before the same has been ended a thick cloude has darkened the aire and on a sudane a thunder clap hath bin heard that has amazed the natives; in an instant hee hath showed a firme peace of Ice to floate in the midste of the bowle in the presence of the vulgar people which was doubtless done by the agility of Satan his consort."

C. E. Potter, historian of Manchester, N. H., comments on this as follows: "From which marvellous story we are to infer that Passaconaway to the character of a brave warrior added that of a clever juggler. In fact he held his people in great awe of him, the Indians supposing him to have supernatural power; to have control over their destinies; that he could make a dry leaf turn green; water burn, and then turn to ice, and could take the rattlesnake in his hand with impunity. With such reputed power and wisdom as a Sagamore, Passaconaway was the acknowledged head of the most powerful Indian confederacy east of the Mohawks and as such received the title of Bashaba, a title of much the same import as that of Emperor."

In 1627, when Morton wrote, Passaconaway was Chief Sagamore of the Pawtuckets, Penacooks, Wamesits, Nashuas, Souhegan, Namoskeages, Winnepesaukees, Ossipees, Pemmgwassetts, Coosukes, Pequakes, Sacos, Piscataques, Newichewannocks, Agawams, Wauchusetts, and Massachusetts which divisions were similar to the Clans of Scotland.

The welcome to and confidence in the English by Passaconoway is shown in a deed from the Indians to John Wheelwright and his associates dated the 17th day of May, 1629:

"At a general meeting of Indians at Squamscott Falls, Passaconaway, Sagamore of Pawtucket; Gunnaawitt of Pentucket; Wahangnonawit of Squamscott and Rowle of Newichwannock expressed their desire to have the English come and settle among them as among their countrymen in Massachusetts whereby they hope to be strengthened against their enemies the Tarranteens, and accordingly with the universal consent of their subjects for what they deemed a valuable consideration in coats, shirts, and kettles sell to John Wheelwright of the Massachusetts Bay, Augustin Story, Thomas Wright, William Wentworth, and Thomas Leavit all that part of the main land bounded by the

river Pascatqua and the river Merrimack to begin at Newichwannock Falls in Pascatqua river aforesaid and down said river to the sea and along the sea shore to Merrimack River, and up said river to the falls at Pawtucket, and from thence upon a northwest line twenty English miles into the woods; and from thence upon a straight line northeast till it meet with the main rivers that run down to Pawtucket falls and Newichwannock falls aforesaid, the said rivers to be the bounds from the thwart or head line to the aforesaid falls and from thence the main channel of each to the sea to be the side bounds; together with all the islands within the said bounds; and also the isle of shoals so called. The conditions of this grant were that Wheelwright should within ten years begin a plantation at Squamscott falls; that other inhabitants should have the same privilege with him; that no plantation should exceed ten miles square; that no lands should be granted but in townships; and that these should be subject to the government of the Massachusetts Colony until they should have settled a government among themselves; that for each township they should be paid an annual acknowledgment of one coat of trucking cloth to Passaconaway, the chief Sagamore, or his successors and two bushels of Indian corn to Wheelwright and his heirs. The Indians reserved to themselves free liberty of fishing, fowling, hunting and planting within these limits. The principal persons of Pascatqua and the province of Maine were the witnesses to the subscribing of this instrument and giving possession of the lands."

We next come to the Indian deed of Haverhill in which Passaconaway is again recognized as Chief Sagamore of the Merrimack Valley Indians:

"KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS that we Passaquo & Sagga Hen with the consent of Passaconaway have sold unto the inhabitents of Pentucket all ye lande we have in Pentucket that is eight miles in length from ye little river in Pentucket, Westward six miles in length from ye aforesaid river; Eastward with ye Islands and the river that ye islands stand in as far in length as ye land lays by as formerly expresses that is fourteen miles in length, and we, ye said Passaquo & Sagga

Hen with ye consent of Passaconaway have sold unto ye said Inhabitants all ye right to that we or any of us have in ye said ground & Islands & Rivers. And we warrant against all or any other Indians whatsoever unto ye said Inhabitants of Pentucket to their heirs and assigns forever. Dated ye fifteenth day of November Anno Dom. 1642.

WITNESS our hands and seals to this bargain of sale ye day and year above written (in ye presence of us) we ye said Passaquo & Sagga Hen received in hand for and in consideration of ye same three pounds & ten shillings.

JOHN WARD
ROBERT CLEMENT
TRISTIAM COFFIN
HUGH SHERRITT
WILLIAM WHITE
The sign of
THOMAS DAVIS

X The Mark of Passaquo
X The mark of Sagga Hen."

We next come to a treaty with Passaconaway as Chief Sagamore of the Merrimack Valley Indians:

"At a general Court held in Boston the 12th day of the fourth month (June) 1644.

Passaconaway, Nahanancommock did voluntarille submit themselves to us as appareth by their covenant subscribed by their own hands heire following & other articles to wch they consented. We have & doe by theise presents voluntarily & without any constraint or persuasion but of our own free motion put ourselves our subjects Lands and estates under the Goverment and protected by them according to their just laws and order so far as we shall be made capable of understanding them. And we doe promise for ourselves & and all our subjects to all our posteritie to be true and faithful to the said Govrmt. & ayding to the maintenance thereof to our best abilitie and from tyme to tyme to give speedy notice of any conspiracie attempt or evil intention of any which we shall know or heare of against the same and we doe promise to be willing from tyme to tyme to be

instructed in the knowledge and worship of God. In witness whereof wee have heerento put our hands the day and year above written."

Charles Cowley writes in his "Memories of the Indians and Pioneers of the Region of Lowell":

On the part of the Indians every stipulation in their instrument was faithfully kept and performed. Would that the same praise could be awarded to the whites. History must weep to relate that within twenty years from the date of this treaty of submission, Passaconaway was reduced to the condition of a pauper, a stranger in the land of his fathers, dependent for his subsistence on the cold charity of those who had dispossessed him of his native soil.

In 1642, upon suspicion that a conspiracy was forming among the Indians to destroy the English, forty men were sent out to arrest Passaconaway, but he escaped by reason of a storm, but his son Wannalancit was taken and they barbarously led him with a rope which he loosened and tried to escape. His captors fired at him and came near hitting him, and he was retaken and imprisoned at Boston. For this outrage the government of Massachusetts feared the just resentment of Passaconaway and they sent Cutshamekin whom they had arrested upon the same occasion and had discharged to excuse the matter to the old Chief and invited him to go to Boston and hold a conference with them. The answer of the old Sagamore showed an independent spirit: "Tell the English when they restore my son and his squaw then will I talk with them." This outrage upon the family of Passaconaway must have made a deep impression upon his mind and led him to doubt the sincerity of the professions of the English toward him, and in 1647 he exhibited this distrust in a forcible manner. At this time the Rev. Mr. Eliot for the first time came to Pawtucket Falls for the purpose of preaching to the natives. It was the fishing season, and a vast number of Indians were present. Among them was Passaconaway with two of his sons. The old Chief refused to see Mr. Eliot and retired immediately from the neighborhood taking with him his sons saying "he was afraid the English would kill him."

In 1648, Mr. Eliot came again to Pawtucket as usual at the fishing season, and the Old Sagamore had become convinced of his sincere friendship and heard him gladly. Mr. Eliot preached to the assembled Indians from Malachi I; XI. This verse he paraphrased thus: "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same Thy name shall be great among the Indians; and in every place prayer shall be made to Thy name, pure prayer, for Thy name shall be great among the Indians."

The Indians paid the closest attention and after the discourse proposed many appropriate and amusing questions. Afterwards Passaconaway arose and amid the most profound attention announced his belief in the God of the English. He remarked, says Mr. Elliot in a letter of date of Nov. 12, 1648 "That indeed he had never prayed unto God as yet for he had never heard of God before as now he doth and that he did believe what I taught them to be true. And for his own part he was purposed in his heart from thenceforth to pray unto God and that hee would persuade all his sonnes to doe the same pointing to two of them who were there present and naming such as were absent."

In 1652 Passaconaway furnished several of his Indians as guides to a committee of the General Court attended by Jonathan Ince and John Sherman, surveyors, to find the most northerly bound of the Merrimack River. The Indians had told them it was at Aquedochtan, the outlet of Lake Winnepesaukee. On their return they reported as follows:

The answer of John Sherman, Sergt. at Watertown, and Jonathan Ince, student at Harvard College, in Cambridge, to Captain Simon Williard and Capt. Edward Johnson, Commissioners of the General Court held at Boston May 27th, 1652, concerning the latitude of the northernmost part of Merrimack River:

"Whereas wee, John Sherman and Jonathan Ince, were procured by the aforesaid Commissioners to take the latitude of the place above named; Our answer is that at Aquedahcan the name of the head of the Merrimack where it issues out of the Lake called Winnapusseait upon the first day of August, one thousand six hundred and fifty two, wee observed and by observation found that the latitude of the place was forty three de-

grees forty minutes and twelve seconds beside those minutes which are to be allowed for the three miles more north wch run into the Lake. In witness whereof wee have subscribed our names this nineteenth day of October one thousand six hundred fifty two.

JOHN ENDICOTT, *Subi.*
JOHN SHERMAN,
JONATHAN INCE."

In a letter of Oct. 29, 1649, Mr. Eliot writes: "Passaconaway, the Great Sachem of all the tribes that dwell in the valley of the Merrimack did exceeding earnestly and importunately invite me to come and live at his place and teach them. We used many arguments; this was one, that my coming once a year did them but little good because they soon forgot what I had taught. You do as if one should come and throw a fine thing among us and we should catch at it earnestly because it appears so beautiful, but cannot look at it to see what is within; there may be in it something or nothing, a stick or a stone or precious treasure; but if it be opened and we see what is valuable therein then we think much of it. So you tell us of religion and we like it very well at first sight but we know not what is within; it may be excellent or it may be nothing — we cannot tell; but if you will stay with us and open it to us and show us all within we shall believe it to be as good as you say it is."

Eliot afterwards complied with the earnest invitation of Passaconaway in that he writes, which Gookin confirms, that he established schools and preaching at Nahamkeage and later Magistrate Daniel Gookin his Indian Court, the old building of which is still standing. This then was in the wilderness and acknowledged to be the Indians' own land up to the military grant to John Evered and associates. After Magistrate Daniel Gookin came Magistrate Jonathan Tyng. The Indian and Colonial Court building was afterwards used as a Tavern, the Court Room becoming a dance hall. During King Philip's war it was palisaded and used as a garrison by Edward Coburn and sons.

We now come to the appropriation of an opening up of the wilderness in this military grant to members of the Ancient and Honorable Company.

At the time of this military grant Namamocomuck, the oldest son of Passaconaway was imprisoned in Boston for a debt due from another Indian to one John Tinker and for which he had become responsible. In order to raise the money to pay the debt and charges the Indians petitioned the Court for the right to sell the Island of "Wickasauke." The Court gave permission to sell it as follows:

"*License for Indians to sell an Island.* Whereas this Court is informed yt Pesaconaway's sonne now in prision as surety for ye payment of a debt of forty five pounds or thereabouts and having nothing to pay but affirme that severall Indians now in possession of a small Island in Merrimack River (about sixty acres) the half whereof is broken up; are willing after this next yeares use of their sayd Island to sell theire Interest in ye said Island to whoever will purchase it and so to redeem the sayd Pesaconaway's sonne out of prison. The magistrates are willing to allow the sayd Indians liberty to sell ye sayd Island to Ensigne Jno. Evered as they and he can agree for ye ends aforesaid. If their brethren the deputys consent hereto.

"Nov. 8th, 1659. The deputys consent hereto provided the Indians have liberty to sell the sd. Island to him that will give most for it.

Consented to by ye magistrate.

EDW. RAWSON, Secy.
June 7th, 1659.

"Laid out to Left. Peter Oliver, Capt. James Oliver, Capt. James Johnson and Ensigne John Evered one thousand acc. of land; in ye wilderness on ye northerne side of Merrimack River; Lying about Nahamkeage being bounded with Merrimack Riv. on ye south and on ye west; the wildernesse elsewher surrounding according to marked trees; as bye a plott taken of the same is demonstrated.

By JONATHAN DANFORTH, Surveyr

The deputies approve of this returne with reference to the consent of or Honnrd. Magists. hereto.

WILLIAM TORRY, Cleric.

Consented to by ye magist.

EDW. RAWSON, Secre'ty."

Up to this time all the wilderness north of the Merrimack belonged to Passaconaway and his tribes and seeing by this grant that the English were going to claim it all without considering his or their rights, the following spring at a great gathering of the Indians during the fishing season at Pawtucket falls, he abdicated his office as head of the nation and prophesied their extinction in the following speech as reported by an Englishman present:

"Hearken to the words of your father. I am an old oak that has withstood the storms of more than an hundred winters. Leaves and branches have been stripped from me by the winds and frosts — my eyes are dim — my limbs totter — I must soon fall! But when a young man and sturdy, when my bow — no young man of the Pawtuckets could bend it — when my arrows would pierce a deer at an hundred yards — and I could bury my hatchet in a sapling to the eyes — no weekwam had so many furs — no pole so many scalp locks as Passaconaway! Then I delighted in war. The whoop of the Pawtuckets was heard when the Mohawks came — and no voice so loud as Passaconaway's. The scalps upon the pole of my weekwam told the story of Mohawk suffering. The English came, they seized our lands; I set me down at Pawtucket. They fought with fire and thunder, my young men were swept down before me when no one was near them. I tried sorcery against them but still they increased and prevailed over me and mind, and I gave place to them, I that can make the dry leaf turn green again. I who have had communion with the Great Spirit dreaming and awake — I am powerless before the Pale Faces. The oak will soon break before the whirlwind — it shivers and shakes even now; soon its trunk will be prostrate, the ant and the worm will sport upon it. Then think, my children, of what I say; I commune with the Great Spirit. He whispers to me now—Tell your people Peace Peace is the only hope of your race. I have given fire and thunder to the pale faces for weapons — I have made them plentier than the leaves of the forest and still shall they increase; these meadows shall they turn with the plow — these forests shall fall by the axe — the pale faces shall live upon your hunting grounds and make their villages upon your fishing places. The Great

Spirit says this, and it must be so. We are few and powerless before them. We must bend before the storm; the wind blows hard; the old oak trembles; its branches are gone; its sap is frozen; it bends; it falls! Peace, Peace with the white men — is the command of the Great Spirit — and the wish — the last wish of Passaconaway."

In 1665 the Indians petitioned the Governor and Court as follows:

"To the Worshipful Richard Bellingham, Esq., Gov., and to the rest of the Honord Jenerall Court. The petition of us poore neibor Indians whose names are hereunto subscribed humbly sheweth that whereas Indians severall years since we yr. petits. out of pity and compassion to our pore brother and countreman to redeem out of prision and bondage whose name is Nanamocomuck, the eldest son of Passaconewa who was cast into prison for a debt of another Indian unto John Tinker for which he gave his word; the redemption of whome did cost us our desirable posetions where we and ours had and did hope to enjoy our Livelihood for ourselves and posterity; namely an Island on Merrimack River called by the name of Wicomke which was purchased by Mr. John Web, who hath curtiously given us leave to plant upon ever since he hath possessed the same we do not know whether to goe nor where to place ourselves for our Livelyhood in procuring us bread; having beine very very solicitous wh. Mr. Webb to let us enjoy our said posetions againe he did condecend to our motion provided we would repay him his charges but we are pore and cannot doe so — or request is Mr. Webb may have a grant of about 5C. acres of lands in the wilderness which is our own proper lands as the aforesaid Island ever was.

10--8--65

Nob How in behalf of
my wife and children
UNANUNQUOSETT
WANNALANCITT
NONATOMINUT"

The petition was granted in the following terms:

"In ans. to this petition the Court grant Mr. Jno. Evered five hundred acres of land adjoining to his lands upon condition hee release his right in an Island in Merrimack river called Wicosaeke which was purchased by him of the Indian petitioners — also upon condition Wanalancett do release a former grant to him of an hundred acres and the Court do grant said Island to petitioners — John Parker and Jonathan Danforth are appointed to lay out this grant of five hundred acres to John Evered.

EDW. RAWSON, Secy.

14 Oct. 1665. Consented by the Deputies."

At this time Evered alias Webb had from Bess, wife of Nobb How, a daughter of Passaconaway, an agreement to release all right, claim, or interest she had in the land Evered had acquired and following this he acquired a deed from the sons of Passaconaway with her of all the Court had granted him.

The original papers of agreement and deed are now in possession of a direct descendant of Edward Coburn, original permanent settler of Dracut, and were but lately brought to light having for years lain concealed in a secret drawer of an old desk. This agreement and deed is as follows:

The Covenant of promise of Bess Nobb How wife xxx ye Land of Augumtoocooke: "Be it known unto all men by these presents that I Bess, wife of Nobb How of Wea-Wamesit in the County of Middlesex in New England for and in consideration of four yards of Duffill and one pound of tobacco do hereby covenant and promise to and with Captayne John Evered alias Webb of Draucutt in the County of Norfolk that I, the said Bess for the consideration aforesaid will sign, seal and deliver a demand of covenant in writing of bargain and sale to the said John Webb his executors, administrators and assigns, any or either of them of me the said Bess of all the lands, premises and Hereditaments now in the tenure, possession and holding of him, the said John Webb, his assign or assigns, tenant or under tenants now known and called by the name of Draucutt aforesaid and before the alienation thereof called and known and reported to be called

and known by the name of Augumtoocooke. In testimony whereof I, the said Bess, have hereunto subscribed my name or made my mark this six and twentieth day of the month of Aprill in the year of our Lord God one thousand six hundred sixty and five (1665)

Signed, and delivered in the presence of Richard Shatewell, Samuel Varnum.

BESS—NOBB HOW, wife X her mark"

This is followed by a deed to Capt. John Evered alias Webb:

"To all Xtian (Christian) people to whom this present deed of Bargayne and Sale shall come: GREETING:

Be it known unto all men by these presents that wee Manumusett alias Annansauge, Nonatoonamit and Bess, the wife of Nobb How for divers good causee and valuable consideration we hereunto moving have devised, granted, bargayned, sold, alyened, and enfeoffed and confirmed and by these presents do joyntly and severally devise, grant, bargayne, sell, alyen, enfeofe and confirm unto Captayne John Evered alias Webb of Drawcutt upon Mynomack alias Merrimack in the County of Norfolk, late of the town of Boston in New England, Merchant, all and singular one and every of right, title and titles, interest and interests, challenge and challenges, property and properties, deed and deeds, clayme and claymes whatsoever we all or any of us have or may ever of right or of any rights ought to have challenge or clayme whatsoever upon any pretense or color whatsoever into or unto all and every part of the Lands, premises, hereditaments to those and every of them now or at any tyme or tymes thereof in the tenure, use, occupation, holding, or possession of the said John Evered, his heyres or assigns, tenants, or under tenants now called and known by the name of Drawcutt aforesaid lately called and known or reported to be called before the alienation thereof Augumtoocook or by what other name or names soever before the same hath been called or known or reported to be called or known or any part thereof.

Any tyme or tymes soever before the sealing and delivery hereof to have and to hold all and singular ye said land, premises hereditaments whatsoever as is in said presents before devised, granted, bargayned, sold, alyened, enfeoffed and confirmed unto

the said John Evered as aforesaid unto him the John Evered, alias Webb, his heyres and asignes forever, the same and every part thereof to enure and be his sole and only power, benefit, use and behoof of him, the said John Evered, alias Webb, his heyres and assigns forever and to their use and benefit or behoof whatsoever. And furthermore we the said Manumusett, Nonatoonamit and Bess, the wife of Nobb How doe by these presents for us and every of us, jointly and severally covenant and promise to and unto the said John Evered his heyres and assigns all and singular the said devised premises with theyr and every of theyr appurtenances aforesaid from tyme to tyme and all tymes thereafter to warrant and defend against us and every of us our heyres executors, administrators and assigns and every of them and all manner of other person or person whatsoever clayming the same or part thereof in, by, from or under or any or either of us or either of our heyres executors or administrators.

In testimony whereof wee, the said Manumusett, Nonatoonamit and Bess, the wife of Nobb How aforesaid have hereunto sett our hands and seals or caused them to be sett and our names with our marks subscribed the nineteenth day of August in the year of our Lord God according to the computation of New England aforesaid One thousand six hundred and sixty five.

Signed, sealed and delivered
by Manumsett and Nonatoonamit
aforesaid according to the
date aforesaid in presence of
us Joseph Maumauneronoote
X
His marke
Nimrod Indian
his X marke
(El) Hen Nelson

Manumusett ◯ his seal

Nonatoonamit ◯ seal

Bess wife of Nobb How
her X mark (Seal)

Then appeared before me this fifteenth of the sixth month 1666, the three persons yt have hereunto signed, sealed and acknowledged the deed, before me

Daniel Gookin

This instrument entered and recorded in ye County Records for Norfolk County Page 74 this 5th day of the 9th mo. 1666.
(Register's name is torn off)"

It will be seen by this deed that Passaconaway kept to his abdication and that deeds of lands were given by his children and without obtaining his signature. At this time it is apparent that Wannalancit's principal residence was at the island of Wickasee and that Passaconaway was on the Indian reservation of Pawtucket Falls on the north bank of the Merrimack which later became a large part of Dracut. About Namkeke, as Gookin writes, two miles from the Falls was Eliot's school, preaching station and Gookin's Indian Court. The following happening related by Gookin shows the intense hostility of the Mohawks and how near they came to Pawtucket in their raids:

"In the year 1670 a party of Mohawks looking for their prey met with Indians in the woods belonging to Nahamkeke upon the north side of the Merrimack river not far from English houses. When falling upon Indians that were traveling in a path they killed some and took some whom they also killed and among the rest a young maid of about fourteen years of age was taken, and the scalp of her head taken off and her skull broken and left for dead with others. Some of the Indians escaping came to their fellows and met a party of men. They went to bury the dead bodies when they found the maid with life in her, so they brought her home and got Lieut. Thomas Henchman, a good man and one that hath inspection over them by my orders to use means for her recovery. Though he had little hope he took the best care he could. As soon as he conveniently could, he sent her to an ancient and skilful woman called Goodwife Brooks, living at Woburn, about ten miles distant to use her best endeavors to recover the maid, and by the blessing of God she did, although she was about two years recovering her.

"I was at Goodwife Brook's in May 1673 and she showed me a piece or two of the skull she had taken out, and in May 1674 I was among the Indians at Pawtucket to keep Court and Mr. Eliot and Mr. Daniels and others with me. I saw the maid alive and in health and looked upon her head which was whole except

a little spot as big as a sixpence might cover and the maid fat and lusty, but there was no hair come again where the scalp was flayed off."

It is recorded that in 1669, the year before this raid, Wannalancit came down the river to Pawtucket and rebuilt the fort as a protection from the Mohawks. This fort was the oval hill from which so many Indian relics have been taken, situated on Riverside Street opposite the Lowell Textile School. It is evident the raiding party kept well away from the fort as this incident was between the Merrimack and Lake Mascuppic. Another fact in connection with this raid is that Gookin met the maid on her recovery at the same time and place of Wannalancit's embracing the Christian faith which he relates as follows:

"At this place once a year at the beginning of May the English magistrate keeps the court accompanied by Mr. Eliot the minister who at this time takes his opportunity to preach not only to the inhabitants but to as many of the strange Indians that can be persuaded to hear him of which sort usually in times of peace, being an ancient and capital seat of the Indians, they come to fish; and this good man takes opportunity to spread the net of the gospel to fish for their souls. Here it may not be impertinent to give you the relation following: May 5th, 1674, according to our usual custom Mr. Eliot and myself took our journey to Wamesit or Pawtucket and arrived there that evening. Mr. Eliot preached to as many of them as could be got together out of Matt. 22d, 1-14, the parable of the marriage of the king's son. We met at the wigwam of one called Wannalancit about two miles from the town near Pawtucket falls and bordering upon Merrimack river. This person Wannalancit, is the eldest son of old Passaconaway the chiefest sachem of Pawtucket. He is a sober and grave person and of years between fifty and sixty. He has always been loving and friendly to the English. Many endeavors have been used several years to gain this sachem to embrace the Christian religion, but he has stood off from time to time and not yielded up himself personally though for years he hath been willing to hear the word of God preached, and to keep the Sabbath. A great reason that hath kept him off I con-

ceive hath been the indisposition and averseness of sundry of his chief men and relations to pray to God which he foresaw would desert him in case he turned Christian. But at this time, May 6th, 1674, it pleased God to so influence and overcome his heart that it being proposed to him to give his answer concerning praying to God after some deliberation and serious pause he stood up and made a speech to this effect:

"Sirs: You have been pleased for years past in your abundant love to apply yourselves particularly unto me and my people to exhort, press and persuade us to pray to God. I am very thankful to you for your pains. I must acknowledge,' said he, 'I have all my days used to pass in an old canoe (alluding to his frequent custom to pass in a canoe upon the river), and now you exhort me to change and leave my old canoe and embark in a new canoe to which I have hitherto been unwilling, but now I yield up myself to your advice and enter into a new canoe and do engage to pray to God hereafter.' "

This act of Wannalancit's was the year before the commencement of King Philip's war, and there is a strong probability that he knew that chief was making preparations for the Indian uprising and was endeavoring to enlist the Merrimack Valley Indians in the war to come, so he took a stand, that he consistently followed, of peace throughout the struggle. Many happenings are on record of this. Wannalancit withdrew into the wilderness and this disquieted the Great and General Court so on Sept. 8th, 1675 it ordered Capt. Thomas Brattle and Lieut. Thomas Henchman to send a runner or two to Wannalancit, Sachem of Naamkeke, who had withdrawn into the woods from fear, to come in again and to inform the Indians at Penacook and Naticook if they will live peaceably they shall not be harmed by the English. Under date of Oct. 1st, 1675 they gave the following:

"This our writing or safe conduct doth declare that the governor and council of Massachusetts do give you and every of you provided you exceed not six persons free liberty of coming unto and returning in safety from the House of Lieut. T. Henchman of Naamkeke and there to treat with Capt. Daniel Gookin

and Mr. John Eliot whom you know and (whom) we will fully empower to treat and conclude with you upon such meet terms and articles of friendship, amity, and subjection as was formerly made and concluded between the English and old Passaconaway your father and his sons and people; and for this end we have sent these messengers to convey these unto to you and to bring your answer whom we desire you to treat kindly and speedily to despatch them back to us with your answer.

Dated in Boston Ist October 1675.

Signed by order of the Council JOHN LEVERETT, Gov'r.
EDWARD RAWSON, Sec'y."

The message reached Wannalancit, but he declined to return and the government bringing force to make him, ordered the noted Indian fighter, Capt. Samuel Mosely, with a company of one hundred men to disperse the Indian enemy at "Penagog," said to be gathered there for the purpose of mischief, and Capt. Mosely marched to Penacook but found their fort entirely deserted. Mosely burned their wigwam and destroyed their dried fish which had been cured for their winter use. Daniel Gookin says: "This was a mistake for there was not above one hundred in all the Penagog and Namkig Indians whereof Wannalancit was chief when the English drew nigh (whereof he Wannalancit) had intelligence by scouts they left their fort and withdrew into the woods and swamps where they had advantage and opportunity enough in ambushment to have slain many of the English soldiers without any great hazard to themselves; and several of the young Indians inclined to it, but the Sachem Wannalancit by his authority and wisdom restrained his men and suffered not an Indian to appear or shoot a gun. They were very near the English and yet though they were provoked by the English who burnt their wigwams and destroyed their dried fish, yet not one gun was fired at any Englishman."

At this time the Wamesit Indians who lived below Pawtucket Falls at the mouth of the Musketaquid River (Concord), who acknowledged allegiance to the Pawtuckets, were wrongly accused of burning a stack of hay belonging to James Richardson and all the able-bodied men were arrested and taken to Boston. Three of them were convicted and sold as slaves; the others set

free and as they were returning home, in passing through Woburn, were fired upon by a man by name of Knight, killing an Indian related to the principal Indians of Natick and Wamesit.

On the fifteenth day of November a barn of Lieut. James Richardson of Chelmsford being burned, the Indians were charged with it and a body of fourteen armed men went to the wigwams of the Indians, called them to come out,—men, women and children. Two of the English fired upon them, killing one boy and wounding five of the women and children. There now being no safety for them at their home, the entire tribe removed into the wilderness to join Wannalancit. The English ordered Lieut. Henchman to send after them and persuade them to come back. An Indian, by the name of Weeoposit, was sent who found the Indians about Penacook, but could not persuade them to come back. They were suffering much for food, but still they preferred staying in the wilderness, but they sent back a letter giving their reasons for leaving which was written by Simon Betogkow, their Indian preacher and teacher, who had been taught by Mr. Eliot:

"To Mr. Thomas Henchman, of Chelmsford: I: Numphow and John Line we send the messenger to you again with this answer; we cannot come home again; we go towards the French; we go where Wannalancit is. The reason we went away from our home we had help from the Council but that did not do us good, but we had wrong by the English. 2dly: The reason we went away from the English for when there was any harm done in Chelmsford they laid it to us and said we did it and we know ourselves we never did harm to the English, but we go away peaceably and quietly. 3dly: As to the Island we say there is no safety for us because many English be not good and maybe they come to us and kill us as in the other case. We are not sorry for what we leave behind, but we are sorry the English have driven us from our praying to God and from our teacher (Mr. Eliot). We did begin to understand a little praying to God. We thank humbly the Council; we remember our love to Mr. Henchman and Mr. James Richardson.

The mark of X John Line } Their
The mark of X Numphow } Rulers"

These Wamesits missed finding Wannalancit and the Pawtuckets and most of them were forced to return to Chelmsford from fear of starvation. Major Gookin, Major Williard, and Mr. Eliot were appointed a committee to visit and comfort them and to make necessary provision for them. On the 5th of February, following, they petitioned the Government and Council, through Jerathmel Bowers, that they might be removed from Chelmsford fearing to stay, and their petition being neglected they fled again into the woods towards Pennakoog, leaving only five or six in one wigwam who were lame and blind. This wigwam was set on fire by some of the people of Chelmsford and they were all burned together.

The Wamesits succeeded this time in finding Wannalancit, but not until a number had perished of hunger among whom was Mystic George and Numphow, then Sagamore, the husband of Bess, daughter of Passaconaway.

None of the Indians returned to Pawtucket until after the close of King Philip's War when a few came with Wannalancit who at this time called upon the Rev. Mr. Fish of Chelmsford and inquired if they had suffered much during the war. Mr. Fish told him very little for which he thanked God. The following March, 1677, this information was communicated to the Governor and Council by James Parker from Mr. Henchman's farm "near Merrimack Haste Post Haste."

"To the Honored Governor and Council. This may inform your honors that Sagamore Wannalancit came this morning to inform me and then went to Mr. Tyng's to inform him that his son being on ye other side of Merrimack River, a hunting, and his daughter with him up the River over against Souhegan upon the 22nd of this instant he discovered 15 Indians on this side of the River which he supposed to be Mohawks by their speech. He called them; they answered, but he could not understand their speech and he having canou there in the River he went to fech his canou that they might not have anines of it; in the mene time they shot about thirty guns at him and he being frighted fled and came home to Nahamcook forthwith where their wigwams now stand.

Rec'd 9 night 24 March 76-77." JAMES PARKER.

Wannalancit stopped about in the region of Wickasee until September, but the English had taken his planting grounds. Mr. Eliot says, "He (Wannalancit) was persuaded to come in again; but the English having plowed and sown all their lands they had but little corn to subsist by. A party of French Indians (of whom some were of the kindred of this Sachem's wife) very lately fell upon this people being but few and unarmed and partly by persuasion and partly by force carried them away.

"The fact is Wannalancit saw his lands taken up and improved which the Legislature had granted him."

This was the 19th of September, 1677. Major Gookin, the fast friend of Wannalancit, gives the following reasons for his leaving and retiring to St. Francis:

"First this man had but a weak company, not above eight men.

"Secondly, he lived at a dangerous frontier place for the Mohawks that were now in small parties watching opportunities to slay and captivate these Indians, had lately done mischiefs a few miles off.

"Thirdly he had but little corn to live on for the ensuing winter, for his land was improved by the English before he came in.

"Fourthly, the Indians that came from the French were his kindred and relations for one of them was his wife's brother; and his oldest son also lived with the French.

"Fifth, these Indians Informed him that the war was not yet at an end and that he would live better and with more safety among the Indians."

All the injury to Dracut in King Philip's war was when "the strange Indians," not the Pawtuckets, attacked and burned, with one exception, all the buildings Edward Coburn had purchased of John Evered alias Webb. This exception still standing is what at present is known as the Major Durkee house, and at that time was Daniel Gookin's Indian Court. It then was successfully defended by Edward Coburn and sons, having been palisaded and used as a garrison. It was at this time Samuel Varnum and sons were crossing the river to milk his cows that the Indians shot and killed two of his sons. In April, 1676, the

General Court ordered Lieut. James Richardson to build a garrison house at Pawtucket falls and it was placed under his command. It was located on the Indian reservation and was never attacked by the Indians. This was in excellent condition when torn down.

Our ancestors, in their desire to possess the land, were blinded and did not understand the Indians and never seemed to realize that they were composed of the good and the bad, but in every controversy acted on the theory that they were all bad.

Jeremy Belknap, D. D., author of the "History of New Hampshire," bears testimony as follows:

"However fond we may be of accusing the Indians of treachery it must be confessed that the example was first set them by the Europeans. Had we always treated them with justice and humanity, which our religion inculcates and our true interest at all times required, we might have lived with them in as much harmony as any other people on the globe."

George Catlin, in his "Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians" bears the following testimony: "I fearlessly assert to the world and I defy contradiction that the North American Indian in his native state is everywhere a highly moral and religious being endowed by his Maker with an intuitive knowledge of some great author of his being and the Universe in dread of whose displeasure he constantly lives with the apprehension before him of a future state where he expects to be rewarded or punished according to the merits he has gained or forfeited in this world."

The incidents related by Magistrate Gookin of the raid by the Mohawks was from the river toward Lake Mascuppic. When Dracut was incorporated in 1701-2 its bounds commenced and took in a part of Wannalancit's island of Wickasee, and the falls at that place furnished the fish to fertilize the corn planted on the island, but the great fishing place was the Pawtucket falls from which an enormous quantity of salmon, shad, alewives and Lamprey eels was each year secured and a year's supply of dried and smoked fish stored. The fishing season brought a great

gathering of the Indians of the Merrimack Valley and it was the time of council, merry-making and match-making. In all deeds given by the Indians the right to fish and hunt was reserved. With the departure of Wannalancit to the French, the Pawtuckets never returned to the Falls.

Jeremy's Hill in New Hampshire is often mentioned in early deeds and the following Indian deed dated 1659 but not recorded until 1679 is here given.

"Know All Men By These Presents that I Nedacockett, an Indian born within that tract of land now inhabited and known by the name of Matachusetts, having by lawful right a tract of land which was given my father and uncle, at their death, have upon due consideration and for a debt due to Jeremiah Belcher of Ipswich in New England which has been owing to him seven or eight years of about twenty six pounds, do give and fully grant and make over and sell all my right of that land of mine which butting against Pawtucket and so running along Haverhillward as far as old William's Wigwam and so up the country to a Hill called Jeremy's with all meadows; and this I make over to Jeremy Belcher of Ipswich as above to enjoy with peace and quietness and his heirs forever as witness my hand and seal dated the 28th of March 1659.
Signed and delivered in presence of us
John Denison
Lidia Jordan.

NEDACOCKETT (a mark and seal)

Recorded Feb. 27th, 1679."

Of localities named we present a map of grants of land on the north bank of the Merrimack from Webb's dated 1659 to 1693 which shows the great Indian reservations of Pawtucket Falls which commenced on the river above the Lowell General Hospital; from thence to easterly side of Spruce Swamp; thence to Long Pond (Lake Passaconaway) taking in part of the pond; thence down Alewive or Double Brook to Beaver Brook; from thence up the river to the starting point. There still remains in the woodland, not far from the Lowell General Hospital, a part of the Indian ditch which marked the reservation. There was

an Indian settlement at Long Pond which, in justice, should be named the Indian name of Lake Passaconaway as Tyng's pond has regained its Indian name Lake Mascuppic. The records plainly show that the Indian Court was at Nahamkeag which was the land by the river at the point of the grant to the members of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.

As Chapter V, relating to the establishment of the Province line, is written to prove the important part taken by Dracut when the line was surveyed in 1721, so in the article prepared by Mr. Wilson abundant proof is presented which shows conclusively that the territory now Dracut was the capital seat of the great chief Passaconaway, whose jurisdiction extended over the tribes who dwelt in the valley of the Merrimack. This locality held the same relationship to the others that a capital city does to a state. It was the home of the chief, the location of the court and the place where the first schools for the Indians were established. The article prepared by Mr. Wilson closes after recording events which preceded the commencement of King Philip's war in 1675. The following records relate more to the customs and habits of the Indians and their history during the Colonial period. An effort has been made to avoid repetition but to retain the quaint manner of writing of those early days some of the contents of those early documents are recorded a second time.

The time of the arrival of the Indians in this country and the place from which they came has long been the problem which learned men have tried to solve. They had no written language and consequently no records for the antiquarian to study. Their houses were wigwams composed of frail, perishable material and their abiding places only in such localities as suited their present needs. They located near a river which was a natural highway for journeying in their canoes as their natural indolence caused them to be averse to the labor of walking. They also derived much of their food from the river, and long practice made them skillful in the use of nets and seines. By killing deer and trapping beaver and other animals and dressing the hides, much of their clothing was procured. As many of

the tribes were enemies, they chose those locations most suited for defence and safety. The productiveness of the soil did not influence their choice as they knew nothing of agriculture beyond the raising of yellow corn, beans and squashes and all drudgery of this kind was performed by the squaws. The vast forests of pine and oak trees were of value to them only as homes for the wild animals which they hunted for food.

Their encampments were sometimes found at a distance from the river, but would be near a ledge which would be composed of stone suitable for arrow heads, hatchets, motars, etc. In the Dracut museum there are fragments of a stone basin found while excavating a cellar at the Navy Yard village, also stone hatchets found at New Boston village, a stone knife shaped like a chopping knife and used for scraping the flesh from hides, a butterfly ornament, a stone gouge and arrow heads all found in Dracut. The methods, by which the Indians were able to cut and shape their flint arrow-heads, were for a long time a problem. They knew nothing of the use of iron or steel, but the articles fashioned show skilful work. Selecting proper shaped bones they placed them in the ground and let them remain until the fatty matter was all extracted, and with this hard bone they were able to shape their implements of war and hunting. There were workmen whose duties were to shape these implements, and long practice made them skilful in their work. They studied carefully the grain of the stone and understood the direction and force of the blow as is the custom of the lapidary of the present day when he shapes precious gems.

An Indian encampment mentioned in County records has been identified as being located on the high ground a few rods east of Long Pond and near its southern extremity. Here the Indians cooked their fish and the ashes and charred wood which have been turned out by the plow with the many Indian utensils found here in former times are proof of the location of the camp ground. This field is a part of the Varnum farm now owned by Joseph P. Varnum. They acknowledged a chief or sachem who was the supreme head of the tribe, also sagamores who were next in rank while subject to the chief. They claimed certain locations not as we do by individual ownership but as tribal possessions. When the white men came here, the Pawtucket tribe

of Indians was located near the Falls. The Indians gave the name to the vicinity of the falls as it meant in their language place of a loud noise. Pautuck means a water fall from *pau* a loud noise and *tugh,* place. The Wamesits lived near Concord River where a part of Lowell is now located. Both tribes were friendly and peacable.

The spirit of cruelty and the love of war was lacking and they were subject to invasions of the Mohawks who lived to the west and who were fierce and warlike. The chief, whom the whites found on their arrival, was named Passaconaway and he is entitled to the credit of realizing the situation in which the country was placed and of forecasting accurately the future. In his dealings with the whites we have an illustration of the proverb that history repeats itself. Three thousand years before this time, when the Hebrews were about to enter Canaan, a woman of that nation said to the spies: "I know that the Lord hath given you this land and that a terror is fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you." In the same spirit Passaconaway addresses his people when he conferred the office of sachem on his son, Wannalancit: "I am now going the way of all flesh. I am ready to die and not likely to see you meet together any more. I will now leave this word of counsel with you. Take heed how you quarrel with the English. Hearken to the last words of your father and friend. The white men are the sons of the morning. The Great Spirit is their father. He shines bright about them. Sure as you light the fires the breath of Heaven will turn the breath upon you and destroy you. Remember it and live."

As their numbers decreased, they quietly withdrew and became identified with Canadian tribes. The settlers were not to be allowed to occupy their land in peace, for soon after the Varnums and Coburns arrived, a war of extermination of the settlers was commenced by King Philip and relentlessly carried on. No one was spared, while buildings were burned and cattle driven off and great havoc made before the savages could be overcome. The towns in the Connecticut valley were destroyed and as they advanced eastward the settlements in the Merrimack valley were attacked. Although to some extent Chelmsford was forewarned it did not escape their fury. Extracts from early

histories relating to this territory record these facts. As this occurred before the organization of the town this locality was called Chelmsford.

Fox, in his "History of Dunstable," records: "February 25 1675 an attack was made by the Indians upon Chelmsford and several buildings were burned, Colburn's garrison, on the east side of the river was strengthened but nearly all the other settlements were deserted."

Another writer says: "At Chelmsford the Wamesit Indians about March 18th 1676 fell upon some houses on the north side of the river and burned down three or four that belonged to the family of Edward Colburn."

Another early historian writes: "Chelmsford, where were many deserted houses burned in the beginning of April 1676 belonging to one Ed. Colburn that had formerly purchased the Seat of Capt. Web."

Drake, in his "Indian Wars," says: "Mar. 18th 1675 at Chelmsford the said Wamesit Indians fell upon some houses on the North side of the River burnt down three or four that belonged to the family of Edward Colburn: the said Colburn with Samuel Varnum his neighbor being pursued as they passed over the river to look after their Cattell on that side of the river."

As Edward Colburn's land was on the Merrimack River these houses stood on what is now Varnum Avenue or near it. The historians who have given us the facts have evidently reasoned from the proximity of the Wamesits that they were the aggressors in the destruction of these buildings, but a study of their disposition leads to the conclusion that it was not this peaceful tribe, but either the Mohawks from New York or some wandering parties of King Philip's men who burned and destroyed wherever they found the white man.

On the highland overlooking the river and between the Hamblett or Garrison House Cemetery and Riverside Street, there was a Garrison House erected. Realizing the need of a fort for protection from the raids of the Indians, Lieut. Thomas Richardson received orders to erect one and he chose this site on what is now Riverside Street. It was later the home of Joseph, the youngest son of Samuel Varnum, and probably the one who was wounded at Meadow bridge, as will be recorded later. It was

demolished about 1880. The older residents will remember the low posted two-story building with its large chimney and ancient appearance. Like other block houses, it was built with projecting stories. The first rested on the cellar wall and was of the same size. Th second was larger than the first and the top or attic was still larger.

Mr. Atkinson C. Varnum was interested in Dracut history and preserved much valuable information relating to the early days. His manner of writing and presentation of facts are excellent and his description of the garrison house will be recorded in his own words: "The old two story pitched roof house in Dracut, known as the Garrison house, and situated on the westerly side of the road leading from Pawtucket Bridge to the Navy Yard, is being demolished to make way for the march of improvement. The house is forty-five feet front by twenty-two feet deep and was built by the early settlers of Dracut in 1674 as a place of rendezvous in case of an attack by the Indians for the safety of the women and children, and for the better defence of their property by the men. The roof was about one third pitched and persons could stand under the ridge pole of the attic. The flooring and framing timbers were sixteen inches square and are all hewed instead of being sawed. They are of a reddish variety of pitch pine. The second story projected over the first in order to afford an opportunity to shoot through loopholes downward upon any foe that might make an attack upon the garrison. The perpendicular projecting timbers of the second story terminated in an ornamental finish at their lower extremity and appear as sound as when put into the framework of the building 212 years ago. The bricks of which the lower portion of the chimney was constructed were made in Scotland as appears from the inscription on them. A portion of the basement is partitioned off from the rest by a heavy stone wall. This enclosure is supposed to have been made for the better safety and security of the women and children who sought safety from time to time in the basement."

It may be added that the house was ceiled or wainscotted over the plastering with oak plank to make it bullet-proof. There was also a stockade made of logs standing upright and set in the ground with a gate which was closed at night. In time of alarm

the settlers, with their families, would stay at this house for safety. Those were the times when men working in the field had their muskets at hand and who, on Sunday, carried them to church and stacked them near the door while the sentry kept watch from some elevated platform to give the alarm if the savages appeared.

In his search for early Dracut history Mr. A. C. Varnum has found traditions which, while they cannot be verified, are highly probable. He writes in his reminiscences: "At one time the garrison was surrounded by the Indians who had already got inside of the stockade. Pursued by them into the house, the soldiers prepared to meet the invaders as best they could. The Indians killed the trumpeter who stationed himself at the door, but they were met with such spirit by the gallant defenders that not one of them went out of the fort alive. On another occasion the Indians planned an attack on the garrison. When they were first seen there was no one in the house but a woman and her children, the soldiers having gone out to make some investigations. The woman who kept a sharp lookout, saw the enemy lurking around, and with great presence of mind put on the uniform of a 'Hussar' and taking a musket began walking back and forth in front of the house. In a short time she went out of sight and changed her uniform. All this time the Indians lay watching these movements supposing they had not been seen, but from what they saw imagined the fort was too strongly garrisoned for a successful attack and so they withdrew and left the brave woman unmolested."

At the time of the demolition of the building, its value as a historical landmark was not appreciated. Fortunately an excellent picture of the building was secured, but not until the wings, sheds and stockade had been removed.

In 1859 a writer in the Lowell Citizen says: "A party of men returning from the meadows where they had been after hay were waylaid and fired upon by the Indians at the fordway which is called Old Meadow Bridge." Taken by surprise some were killed and others wounded, but the name of only one has been preserved. Joseph Varnum was wounded but recovered and lived many years. No date is mentioned but as these attacks

occurred usually during King Philip's war there can be little doubt of its being Joseph, son of Samuel Varnum who came from Ipswich.

After the close of Queen Anne's war a treaty of peace with the Indians was concluded at Portsmouth, but their treacherous nature rendered treaties unreliable. While with some tribes their honor or interest would incline them to peace, other tribes would disregard the agreement. In 1724 a party of Mohawks attacked Dunstable killing and carrying away the settlers as captives. Realizing their danger Chelmsford and Dracut sent men to aid their neighbors in defending their homes. Their leader, John Lovewell, with others, petitioned for a license to shoot the Indians. This was probably granted, as two Dracut men, Henry Coburn and John Varnum, served in Lovewell's first expedition, Varnum re-enlisted and served in a second expedition.

The settlements were constantly threatened by the Indians and they were obliged to depend largely on themselves for protection. The petition to which reference has been made is as follows:

"The humble memorial of John Lovel, Josiah Farwell, Jonathan Robbins all of Dunstable sheweth, That your petitioners with near forty or fifty others are inclinable to range and to keep out in the woods for several months together, in order to kill and destroy their enemy Indians, provided they can meet with Incouragement suitable. And your petitioners are Imployed and desired by many others, Humbly to propose and submit to your Honors consideration, that if such soldiers may be allowed five shillings per day, in case they kill any enemy Indian and possess their scalp they will Imploy themselves in Indian hunting one whole year; and if within that time they do not kill any they are content to be allowed nothing for their time and trouble."

Reed's "Hildreth Family" records a muster roll of the company in His Majesty's service under the command of Eleazer Tyng. Ephraim Hildreth, rank, sergeant, residence Dracut. Entrance on the service June 10, 1725. Till what time in the service Nov 3 1725. Whole time in service 21 weeks."

The English government did not recognize any rights which the Indians might have in the land and granted those lands without regard to any claims of former ownership. The grantees in the interest of peace in many cases purchased the land from the Indian claimant. The price paid was often small in proportion to later values, but it satisfied the Indians and made them more friendly disposed towards the white people. Mrs. Clarence G. Coburn has in her possession an old deed, found with other papers where for many years they had lain concealed in a secret drawer in an old desk, and brought to light in later years by the loosening of some of the ornamental work. The ink retains its color while the paper is yellow with age. Previous to the writing of the deed Webb prepared a paper which he presented to Bess, an Indian squaw, with the promise in case she signed it of tobacco and "duffill." This contract may be found in the first section of this chapter on Indian history.

Bess was the daughter of Passaconaway and wife of Nobb How or Numphow the Sagamore of Wamesit. The duffill mentioned was a stout cloth which, like camlet, was in use and from references to it, it was probably cloth of a superior quality.* The poet Wadsworth, in the poem entitled "Goody Blake and Harry Gill," refers to "Good duffel gray and flannel fine."

The Richard Shatswell, whose name appears as one of the witnesses, came to this vicinity at an early date and purchased large tracts of land. He was contemporary with Tyng, Henchman, Webb, Varnum and Coburn, and, in common with the first three named, had no intention to settle, but purchased for purposes of speculation. He came from Ipswich and sold land to Edward Coburn receiving in return Coburn's property at Ipswich. The great pine tree standing at the N. W. corner of Edward Tyng's grant was known as Setchel's pine. (See Early Grants.) His name appears spelled in different ways as, Shatswell, Shadswell, Satchel, Setchel, Sethell, Sachel, Stitchell, Chadwell and Chatswell. There is a meadow on Coburn's sawmill brook called "The Cathole." It is reasonable to infer that it was once the property of Chatswell, but in transferring it by deed to

*Webster's Dictionary defines it as "A kind of coarse woolen cloth having a thick nap or frieze."

different parties the name became at length Cathole. The Samuel Varnum named was from Ipswich and the first of the name to settle in this vicinity.

The original deed is in possession of Mr. J. B. V. Coburn of Lowell and is a valuable relic, as it shows the actual marks made by the Indians and the signature of Daniel Gookin, who for many years was the agent in charge of the Indians and a reliable historian. In an agreement between the inhabitants of Chelmsford and the Indians of Wamesit, in 1665, in relation to the divisional line, the name of "nobhow" appears as one who signed the paper for the Indians. It would appear from this transaction that Bess had an interest in the land north of the river, while her husband, Nob, had authority relating to land on the Concord river. It has already been stated that Bess Nob How or Numphow was the daughter of Passaconaway. Nonatoonamit or Nonatonemut was his son. The identity of the other signer is not so certain. Manumusett or Annaniange, as near as the name can be deciphered, may have been the same person as Unanquosett, another son of Passaconaway which is quite reasonable to suppose. The name of the third witness in full is Elizabeth Henry Nelson. She was a servant maid in the household of Captain Webb, and after his death she received a legacy with some wages due from his estate, for which she gave a receipt to Thomas Henchman the administrator.

Bess appears in later years as the sole grantor in a deed dated April 29, 1684, of which we give an abstract: "Old Bess Numphow widow (the relict of John Numphow of Waymesit deceased) now of Waymesit near Pawtucket, in consideration of a valuable sum of money to Samuel Sewell of Boston, Merchant a small tract of land between three and four hundred acres near Wekasook bounded by Merrimake River on the west, by Samuel Varnum southwardly and Eastwardly, by a farm that was Capt. Scarletts North westerly, containing the whole tract of land that Capt. John Hull Esq. deceased purchased of Thomas Hinchman."

The land thus conveyed is thought to have been the Westerly end of the Military grant, with a part of the Billerica grant, and extended from the river northward to Huckleberry hill. It was formerly owned by Capt. John Webb and from his estate it

passed to Thomas Henchman who gave a title to Capt. John Hull father-in-law of Judge Sewell. The Sewells sold in 1715 to John Colburn who, in 1721, sold to John Littlehale. Later a portion of this property passed again to the Colburns. In 1755 on petition of the Littlehales to the General Court the homesteads and other lands were annexed to Dunstable and are now a part of the town of Tyngsboro.

Another old deed has reference to a portion of the town of Dracut. March 28, 1659, Nedacocket, an Indian, for a debt which he owed to Jeremiah Belcher amounting to 26 pounds sold "All my right of that land of mine which lyeth on the other side of Merrimac River Butting against Panteukit and so running along to Haverhillward as far as to old Williams Wigwam and so up the country to a hill called Jeremys Hill with all the meadows." Old Will is mentioned on the records of Haverhill as having a "planting ground" not far from Spicket River. As Jeremys hill is in the west part of Pelham above Gumpus a line drawn from a point "Haverhillward" to Jeremy's Hill and "Butting against Panteuket" would include the greater part of Dracut. But this would be done to satisfy the Indian, who supposed he had certain rights to the land. Jeremy, who is supposed to have dwelt near the hill in Pelham, which still bears his name, was a signer to this deed with Nedacockett. In 1710 Belcher's son, Jeremiah Belcher, Jr., petitioned the General Court for a grant of land on the right of his father, and the Court ordered the town of Dracut to lay out a tract of three hundred acres. This tract was an oblong 200 by 240 rods between Island and North ponds bounded on the northeast by the latter pond, and on the east by the line of the town. This would include Poplar hill which now lies at the northeastern corner of the town.

About thirty years after the actual settlement of the town another deed was recorded as follows:

"To all Christian people to whom this present deed may come.

Greeting

Know ye that I, Master John Thomas Sagamore Minister of Natick The right heir of the soille of Dracut for three hundred

pounds of silver to him in hand, well and truly paid, ye Minister of Natick John Thomas by John Colburne, Thomas Colburne, Robert Colburne, Daniel Colburne, Ezra Colburne, Joseph Colburne, The Hannah Richardson, widow, Thomas Varnum John Varnum Joseph Varnum of Dracut near Chelmsford in the County aforesaid. Whereof the said John Thomas doth acknowledge doth release and discharge the said John, Thomas, Robert &c and doth freely bargain and convey to the above named John, Thomas, Robert &c Two or three thousand acres of land, be it more or less bounded on Merrimac River on ye South and on Master Sewalls farm on the west and so running a straight line to ye North Side of Lond Pond to a tree with stones by it and marked, and so running Nor East to a Brook called Beaver Brook and containing all the land that the above named Colburns and Varnums possessed and running on Beaver Brook to a farm called Chelmsford land and so running west to a corner pine tree marked and then running South to another pine tree marked and thence running east to another corner bound and running south to Merrimac River at Pau-Tucket, and there bounded by a white oak tree to have and to hold to the said John Colburne, Thomas Colburne &c their heirs administrators and assigns forever. In witness whereof the said John Thomas has affixed his hand and seal hereunto set this seventh day of the fourth month called April in the year of our Lord One Thousand seven hundred and one, in the thirteenth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King William. JOHN THOMAS his seal and mark."

By "Chelmsford land" reference is probably made to the 500 acres on the west of Beaver Brook including Pawtucketville known as The Indian Reservation which had been purchased by parties living in Chelmsford.

In 1629, John Wheelwright purchased of the Indians a large tract of land between the Piscataqua and Merrimack rivers, extending from the sea to "Pentucket Falls and from thence in a north west line twenty English miles into the woods." Whether or not this deed covered the soil of Dracut is uncertain, depending on whether Pentucket (crooked place) is meant the falls at Lawrence or Lowell. It is evident that Wheelwright laid

no claim to the land bounding south on the Merrimack where towns were later laid out by authority of the General Court of Mass. In 1719 the grandson of Wheelwright sold to the settlers of Londonderry by virtue of this deed a tract of ten square miles bounding on the Dracut line.

Reference has been made to Bess, wife of Nob How, a daughter of Passaconaway who was at the head of a confederacy of several tribes which included the Wamesits and Pawtuckets. They were peaceful tribes and largely engaged in agriculture. On the South were the Pequots, who were the leaders in the war for the extermination of the white people in 1675 known as King Philip's war, on the east were the Tarratines, and on the west the Mohawks, all fierce warlike tribes who at intervals would attack the peaceful tribes for the purpose of plunder.

The purpose of the organization was defence against these tribes. King Philip endeavored to enlist these tribes to assist in the war, but they refused to join him. While Passaconaway had a residence at Pennacook Island and other homes on the Merrimack, the region in which Dracut is situated was included in his jurisdiction. In 1660, realizing that his days were numbered, he, according to custom, delivered a farewell address and conferred upon his son, Wannalancit, his authority as chieftain, who in 1669, built a fort at Pawtucket for protection against his enemies the Mohawks.

This was the year in which Edward Colburn came to Dracut and purchased a garrison house near Varnum Avenue. Passaconaway had at least six children, among them Nanamocomuck, a sagamore of the Wachusett tribe, which was about the vicinity of the Wachusett mountains, Unanunquosett, and Nonatomenut, also Bess wife of Nob How, the two last named appearing on the Indian deed on another page and Wannalancit, who, as stated, succeeded his father.

Reference has been made in Mr. Wilson's article to an Indian ditch. In the history of Lowell there are also references to an Indian ditch which was between the settlements of the Wamesits on Concord River and the town of Chelmsford. These were shallow trenches resembling a furrow made by a plow and were designed to show the boundaries of their reservations. The ditch which evidently reached from Merrimack river to Long

Pond, marking the west bound of the Indian Reservation of 500 acres, has nearly disappeared by reason of cultivation of the land and other causes, but a few rods in length remains on a knoll a few rods from the Lowell General Hospital in a northerly direction. As the knoll is not suitable for cultivation, this interesting relic has been preserved, the work of a race once the dwellers of this locality, but which long ago passed away to be succeeded by the white man.



DEACON GEORGE BOVEY

(See Page 400)

CHAPTER IV

EARLY GRANTS AND ALLOTMENTS OF RESERVED LAND

ALL references to the present territory of Dracut, when occupied by the Indians, are to the Willdernesse North of the Merrimack. The Indians kept no records and the ownership of the land was not individual but tribal. The governments of the old world claimed sovereignty by rights of discovery. The French possessed Canada; the Dutch, New York; the Swedes, Delaware; the Spaniards, Florida; and the English, New England and Virginia.

The first task of the settlers was to clear away the forests and disperse the wild beasts and Indians, which were the sole occupants of the land. Gradually removing from the seacoast, as new territory was required, they reached the Merrimack river and in 1653 the town of Chelmsford was incorporated.

The settlers of the new towns were in indigent circumstances. Very little money was in circulation. They needed bridges, school buildings and houses of worship, and application was made to the Colonial authorities for assistance. As funds were needed "advances" so called, were made by men of financial ability and their loans to the treasury were repaid by liberal grants of land in the wilderness. Sometimes these grants were given to civil or military officials for services rendered. Again a grant would be made to assist a needy town. In this way a great part of the territory of Dracut was parcelled out before settlement. It is fortunate that records have been preserved by which the ownership of all parts of Dracut may, in a general way, be found. It is sometimes difficult to locate the exact boundary lines, but distances from water courses, when given, assist in finding the locations, and very early deeds often refer to the lines in a manner intelligible to the student.

The Military Grant

Four members of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, for services rendered, received a grant of land. Retaining the early spelling we find:

"June 7. 1659. Laid out to Left. peter Oliver: Capt. James Oliver: Capt. James Johnson and ensign John Evered one thousand acc. of land in ye wildernesse on ye Northerne side of merrimack River, Lying about Nahamkeage being bounded by merrimack Rivr on ye South and on ye west, the wildernesse else wher Surrounding according to marked trees as bye a plot taken of the same is demonstrated." John Evered for reasons unknown to us adopted the name of Webb, by which name he is generally known. He, by deed dated June 7, 1664, became sole owner of this tract. The deed states that "we, Peter Oliver and Sarah his wife James olliver & mary his wife, & James Johnson and Abagail his wife for and in consideration of a Warehouse built on a parcle of Land on the Southerly part of the Dock called and known by the name of Peter olliver's Dock by John Evered, Aleus Web and by him Declard Long Sinse into their possession &c Have given unto the s^{d} John Evered Aleus Webb all that our Several Parcels of Land being Two Hundred and Fifty Acres of upland & Meadow and in the whole containing seven hundred and Fifty acres be it more or less granted unto us severally and Layed out unto us in one peace."

This is dated "the 27 Day of June 1664 it being in the 15th year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles the Second By the Grace of God of England, Scotland France & Ireland King Defender of the faith."

"Nahamkeage" (variously spelled) meant "eel land" or fishing place, and was the Indian name for the region on and near the river above Pawtucket falls. The plan is on file in the State archives. and the location and bounds can be approximately given. As the site of the first settlement it possesses peculiar interest. The west bound commenced at the east channel of the river, or Wekasoak brook, as it was called, opposite Tyng's Island, now in possession of the Country Club. The line ran from this point about a mile in a northeasterly direction, crossing Scarlet's brook, thence in a southeasterly course 536 rods to a point near the junction of Westmeadow road with Varnum Avenue. Thence it must have run on or near Varnum Avenue 112 rods to an angle south of the Lowell General Hospital. From this point it turned 67 rods to the river, perhaps a few rods westerly of the

mouth of Clay Pit brook crossing the east end of the Boulevard. With the liberal measurements of those days it is likely that these distances exceeded the recorded figures.

Another deed dated January 10, 1664, records the sale by John Evered alias Webb of Drawcutt on Merrimack in the County of Norfolk to Richard Shatswell and Samuel Varnum of Ipswich for £400 one half of the farm of Drawcutt aforesaid "except the fields and the houses, barnes structures edifices and buildings and the garden, the field mentioned to be called the upper field and three acres of the lower field below the log fence next the barne to containe 1100 acres."

Of the grantors and grantees in these two deeds we have little knowledge except Samuel Varnum, who became a settler. They appear to have been speculators, who for convenience erected buildings for shelter until they could dispose of their holdings. Varnum purchased as above recorded in 1664, but there is proof that he lived on the Chelmsford side of the river.

Four years later, Edward Colburne of Ipswich, a former neighbor of Samuel Varnum, purchased, Sept. 30, 1668, of John and Mary Webb for £1300 the remainder of their land, "Commonly called and known by the name of Dracut on the Merrimac." It was bounded by the Merrimack river on the south, by Richard Shatswell on the east, by Shatswell and Varnum on the northeast. Colburn was to pay "two thirds in wheat and malt and one third in beef, pork, and Indian corn." This transaction, like many others, was conducted by barter, owing to the scarcity of money. Varnum and Colburn became permanent residents upon the property, a part of which still remains in possession of their descendants.

The Billerica Grant—800 Acres

Lying to the north of the military grant was a grant to the town of Billerica. This town had petitioned for aid, and in answer the court granted 4000 acres, of which 800 laid within the bounds of Dracut. The record of the laying out, June 6, 1663, gives the length of boundary lines and mentions adjoining properties, Mr. Dummer's farm in Dunstable, Mr. Webb's farm, Long Pond, "Mascuppet" pond, Tray Table Rock,

etc., from which data the tract can be located. It included Lakeview Park and the easterly end of Willow Dale, the most of Huckleberry hill and extended northward to the southeast end of Long Pond. The easterly angle of the grant must have been between Totman and Mammoth roads. This tract was soon purchased by Webb and later by Edward Colburn and Samuel Varnum who became owners of the military grant, as Richard Shatswell sold his share to them.

The Batter Grant

Edmond Batter was a prominent man in Salem, and applying for a tract of land was given a location in the "Wildernesse." "3 m 1662 Layd out to Edmond Batter of Salem two hundred and fifty acres of land, more or lesse, in the Wildernesse on the north side of Merrimacke River and on the west of Beaver Brooke beginning at a place called Double Brooke Meadow, it Joynes to Beaver Brooke about sixty two poles, it lyeth forty two pole wide at the South^{e} end and so lyeth on both sides of Alewive Brooke and reacheth up to a great pond commonly called Long Pond w^{ch} lyeth in the way between Patucket & Jeremies Hill." As it reached from Long pond to Beaver brook it is easy to locate it.

There is no stream corresponding to Alewive brook, unless the branch of Double brook coming in from the west was so called. The tract probably laid on each side of Double brook covering desirable meadows. There are many references to this brook and it is often spelt "Dubble." The tract would lie west of what is now Collinsville and included the farm of Joseph P. Varnum.

Grant to John Martyn

"21 Oct 1663 In answer to the petition of John Martyn, the Court judgeth it meete to grant the petitioner 100 acres of upland, to be layd out lying next to Ensign John Evered alias Webb his land." "18 May 1664 Layd out to John Martyn of Chelmsford 100 acres of land, more or less, on the north of Merrimack river, bounded by the said river on the south 97 pole

and by the Indian plantation on the east 143 pole and from thence it runs to Mr. Webbs farme, which lyne is 200 & 10 pole, bounded there by the wildernesse, and on the west side it is bounded by Mr. Webbs farme.

Laid out by Jona. Danforth, Surveyor, The Court doth allow and approve of this return.''

This tract must have included the site of the Lowell General Hospital and Flag Meadow brook and assists in determining the west bound of the Indian reservation. The grant later came into possesion of the Varnums.

The Indian Reservation

In 1653, John Eliott, fearing the encroachment of white settlers upon the Indian villages at Pawtucket and Wamesit, petitioned the General Court for a reservation of land for them. In answer the Court granted, under date of May 18, 1653, a tract on both sides of the river and covering the most of what is now Lowell.

Five hundred acres were laid out on the north side of the river. No plan is on file nor any description of the laying out of the five hundred acres, but it reached from the river near the head of the falls to Beaver Brook above Meadow bridge. A deed of transfer of adjacent property shows the northern bound to have reached to Long Pond, from which angle it turned southerly to Merrimack river. It was certainly bounded westerly near the river by Martyn's grant.

In 1686, the Indians sold their land to Jonathan Tyng and Thomas Hinchman, who in turn sold it to fifty inhabitants of Chelmsford. The tract became known as ''Chelmsford'' land and later came into possession of Thomas, John and Joseph Varnum, the sons of Samuel Varnum. This included all the land from the Navy Yard to the boulevard and from the Merrimack to the paper mill.

Thus by the purchase of the five grants already described the Varnums and Colburns owned from Tyng's Island to Beaver brook and from the river to Long Pond. The divisional line between the properties belonging to these two families on the

river appears to have been a little above the Thomas Varnum farm, opposite the Old Meadow road. This seems highly probable, as the land west of this line was Colburn land, while on the east it was Varnum land and portions of it are still in possession of the descendants of the original owners bearing those names.

Edward Colburn divided his property between his seven sons and one daughter, who had married Thomas Richardson.

These sons, whose names are given in another chapter, came into possession of the property, but were not all settlers on it as one, Robert, lived at Beverly and among his numerous descendants none are found in Dracut or vicinity. As these several divisions of land contained a large number of acres they, in the next generation, were again divided and passed from father to son but the incorporation of Lowell and the introduction of railroads has made a great change in the farms of the early days. Streets and dwelling houses now occupy the corn fields and forests.

The Russell Grant

Richard Russell came from Herefordshire, England, in 1640, to Charlestown and engaged in business as a merchant. He soon became prominent in the affairs of the Colony. As his ability was recognized, he was advanced from one office to another of more responsibility, becoming finally treasurer of the Colony. A tract of land having been assigned him, the report of the survey is: "12 November 1659 Layd out to Mr. Richard Russell Treasurer one thousand and sixe hundred acres of land, on the northerne side of Merremacke River in the wildernesse, beginning right over against Wajmesicke, being bounded with Beaver Brooke on the west, Merremacke River on the south, the wildernesse elsewhere sourrounding, acording to marked trees, as is more fully demonstrated by a plott taken of the same weh is on file by Jonathan Dunforth Surveyor." The original plan is on file in the State archives. This is further described as: "a parcell of land graunted in the yeare sixteene hundred & fifty to Robert Saltonstall in right of Sir Richard Saltonstall for fower hundred pounds lajd out by him in ye comon stocke, provided that Mr. Russell shall and is hereby engaged to secure

the countrje from any challenge weh shall or may be made to the land herein mentioned by the heirs or executors of the sd Robt Saltonstall or any other as by any right from him."

Thus is seems that the Court gave an equivalent to a quit-claim deed and placed the responsibility of a challenge on Mr. Russell, but no record of any such challenge has been found. The grant to Saltonstall was 3000 acres and apparently it had not been laid out before Russell petitioned for a portion. There is no reason to suppose that the remainder of the Saltonstall grant was within the bounds of Dracut.

The east line of the Russell Grant commenced at the river about opposite the Gen. Butler residence, thence running over Christian hill, practically on the line of Beacon street, crossing Willard street, and forming the east bound of the Clough place, it reaches the Common at the Center, a little east of the Yellow Meeting house and near the line of the horse sheds and "Widow Masseys well," on the north side of Arlington street. It follows the old highway (Chapman street) to Fox avenue, thence on the west of Albert Fox's house to Eugene Fox's house, a few feet westerly of it. The north end is in a wall about forty rods south of the Marsh Hill road.

The north line of the grant runs somewhat south of the west through the woods above the rifle range to an angle south-east of the Selden Colburn house. Then turning southwesterly it reaches Beaver brook, near the site of the paper mill. Thence in a line about a mile long, partly on the brook, but taking in 30 acres on the west side, it reached the river a little west of the mouth of the brook.

In 1671, Russell sold one half of the grant to John Alcock. In 1687 a division was made by the surveyors between James Russell, the son of Richard, and the Alcock heirs. October 15, 1701, Russell sold his half (the eastern portion) to Gov. Jonathan Belcher. The deed states that the tract "was formerly improved by John Whittacur on account of the above said partners both before and after division." "The division begins at a stake by Meremack river a little to the southward of the place where said Whittacur dwelt by the Brookside and from thence across Wilkinsons Brooke east 30 degrees northerly 96 pole to another stake and from thence to run two miles norward four and a half degrees

westward parallel with the outside line which is the end of the said farme at a stake, and from thence one hundred and thirty eight pole betwixt the parallel lines to a Pillar of stones which is the corner of said ffarme and from thence to run parallel with the former line, being 136 pole wide and three miles wanting 40 poles long on the outside to a Walnutt Tree near Merrimack River and so to butt on ye sd River southerly till it come to ye stake below the place where Whittacur dwelt.'' Wilkinsons brook was later known as Richardsons brook from families of that name who settled on it. In recent years it has been turned into a sewer. It ran under Hildreth street westerly but curved south and easterly and it entered the river a few rods above Central bridge.

The ''96 pole'' line must have started at the river near the eastern end of Bunker Hill, so called, and have run to a point on Hildreth street near the Warner Coburn house where the street curves to the east. Belcher's purchase would cover from Beacon street to Hildreth street, as far north as Aiken avenue, and a strip through Dracut Centre to the western slope of Marsh Hill. June 11, 1709, the heirs of John Alcock sold their share of the 1600 acres to Ephraim Hildreth of Chelmsford.

''Butted and bounded upon Merrimack River upon a ditch which divides it from the land of Jonathan Belcher easterly. Southeasterly by a Burrough called formerly Whittakers Burrough.''

Mr. Whittaker then may be considered as the first dweller in Centralville and the first tiller of its soil. Hildreth's purchase will be further described under the head of a following grant to Billerica. Governor Belcher divided his share into house lots and sold to John Colburn, Josiah Richardson, Ephraim Hildreth, Hugh Jones and others. The Russell grant included all of Centralville west of Beacon street, Dracut Centre and the Navy Yard village as far as the northerly end of the rifle range.

The Billerica Grant of 1667

Two tracts of land within the limits of the town were granted to the town of Billerica. One has been described lying east of Tyng's pond, while the other was located on the east side of Beaver brook. The surveyor's report is as follows:

"Layd out to Billiricca five hundred acres of land in the wildernesse, on ye North side of Merimack River and on the east side of Beaver Brooke a little below Patucket. It is bounded on the south and ye southeast wholly by lands formerly granted to Richard Russell esquire and on ye west by ye aforesaid beaver brooke elsewhere by the wildernesse, ye line on ye east side of it is 196 pole in length running half a point westward of ye north which is (exactly) ye continuance of ye long line on ye east side Mr. Russels farme, als both the lines on the north side of it are exactly parallel to ye lines on the south side of it, the most northerly of which is 165 pole longe & runs one half a point westward of ye southwest, the other line runes two degrees westward of ye Southwest & by South four hundred and eighty seaven pole, which closeth to the brooke all which are sufficiently bounded by mark't trees and pillars of stone."

This includes all the land lying between the south line of Mr. Finacom's farm and the south line of the late Selden Colburns farm. West of Hildreth street it includes all between the cross road leading from Hildreth street to the paper mill and Elmer Coburn's at New Boston village, also all lying between the paper mill and Jesse Coburn's house. The east line extended from a point on Marsh Hill south of the road, and running a few rods east of the Augustus Coburn house to a point in the meadows northeast of the house and near the state line. From this point running westerly it formed the southerly bound of the Elijah Coburn farm, part of which is owned by Mr. Finacom.

In 1694, the town of Billerica exchanged this property with Palsgrave Alcock, son of John Alcock, for a similar tract within the bounds of that town. In 1709, the Alcock heirs sold this grant of 500 acres with one half of the Russell grant, a total of 1300 acres, to Ephraim Hildreth, as before stated. Hildreth divided his property and sold land to Ebenezer Goodhue, Josiah Richardson, several of the Colburns and others. Some of this property still remains in possession of the Hildreth heirs.

The Tyng Grant

Hon. Edward Tyng was a man of prominence in the Colony, and father of Jonathan Tyng of Tyngsboro, at whose home he died in 1681. In 1660 he had a grant of land, of which we find the following record:

"3 mo 1660 Laid out to Mr. Edward Tyng of Boston Two hundred and fifty acres of land in ye wilderness on ye Northerne side of merimack River being butted and bounded by a farme laid out to Mr. Russell on ye south east, ye wildernesse elsewhere surrounding according to marked trees as is more fully demonstrated by a plott taken of ye same by Jona. Danforth Surveyor. 4 Oct 1660 Consented to by ye magistrates.

Edward Rawson"

There is an error in this report, as Mr. Russell's line did not bound it on the south. The grant of 500 acres to the town of Billerica, which was made later, lies between Russell's and Tyng's. In 1664, Tyng exchanged this property with Capt. Webb for an equal number of acres on the west side of the river near Salmon brook in Dunstable. Webb sold the eastern half of his new purchase to Shatswell and Varnum. A plot on file in the State office shows his divisional line from north to south, and bears this endorsement on the west-side: "Mr. Webbs share of that farm," and on the east, "Ri Shatswell & Samuel Varnum their part of ye upland." The South line of the grant is unmarked, but is supposed to have commenced at the southwest corner of the farm now owned by William Finacom, from which it ran westerly about one half mile to a point northeasterly of the Benjamin Crosby house. The east line ran north from the Finacom corner one mile, forming the west line of the Finacom land (formerly Elijah Coburns) and the west line of the Gilbert Coburn farm in Pelham, N. H. The northeast corner is near the Beaver brook meadows on land formerly owned by William Lyon and called the "Island." The northwest corner is on the same island about seventy rods further west, where was located "Setchell's corner pine" mentioned in deeds and plans. The west line was near the Old Meadow road, so called, north of the Dana Coburn house.

The divisional line is indicated part of the way by an old wall. There are no houses and but little cultivated land on this tract. On the southern end of this grant is located the spot where, in 1741, the two surveyors, Richard Hazzen and George Mitchell, commenced their surveys for the present State line, the former going west, and the latter to the ocean on the east, and where the Pine Tree monument marks the three mile limit from Pawtucket falls.

The Webb Grant of 1665

Before this date Tyng's or Wicosuck island was in possession of the Indians. For those who desired to engage in agriculture it was an excellent location as, being surrounded by water, the growing crops were secure from the devastation of wild animals. By the payment of a fine which had been imposed upon an Indian, Webb earned their gratitude and, by the consent of the General Court, purchased the island. But the Indians realizing their mistake applied to the Colonial authorities for re-instatement. The Court record is to this effect: "11 Oct 1665 In ans^{r} to the petition of Nobstow, Wannalancet, Nonatomenut, Indians, the Court judgeth it meete to grant Mr. John Evered alias Webb five hundred acres of land adjoining to his land now in his possession vpon condition that he release his right of interest in an Island in Merrimacke River called Wicosuck." "15 May 1667 Layd out 500 acres of land in the wildernesse on the eastern side of Beaver Brooke joyning to land formerly granted to Mr Edward Tyng of Boston. Forty acres of it lyeth joyning to the most westerly angle of the forenamed farme and four hundred & twenty acres of it lyeth joyning to the east side of the aforesaid farme, and forty acres at the north end of the farme. All which joyneth together excepting onely one small parcell of about twenty & two acres in common between Beaver Brook and Mr. Tyngs farme aforesayd, otherwise Beaver Brook doe bound this land on the northwest from the most northerly corner of it which is upon the brooke, the other part of the farme is sufficiently bounded: but it lying so much skirting upon Mr Tings ffarme according to the nature of the grant and Mr Webbs desire."

It is evident that the Webb grant bounded or "skirted" Tyng's on the west, north and east. There is no plan now on file, but the portion lying northwesterly and northerly of the Tyng land was called the Colburn Old Meadows, and of this a plan is preserved. The bulk of this grant laid on the east side of Tyng's covering the farm of William Finacom and the Gilbert Coburn farm which were formerly one property, and embracing the stretch of meadows on the Coburn sawmill brook between the Marshhill farms and the Highland school district in Pelham. It probably reached eastward nearly to Burns' hill. The tract was long known as the Colburn New Meadow Farm. In 1668, after disposing of most of his Dracut property, Capt. Webb was drowned in Boston Harbor, and his wife sold the remainder of his holdings, much of which came into possession of the Colburns.

The Conant Grant

"When the vessel which bore the first Governor of Massachusetts (Endicott) was entering the harbor of Salem, she was anxiously watched from the beach by four individuals styled in the quaint chronicles of the day as Roger Conant and his three sober men. Roger Conant and his three sober men waded into the water and bore him on their shoulders to land." (Extract from address of Dr. J. G. Palfrey at Danvers Cent. Celebration, 1852.)

Roger Conant was the first settler of the name in New England. He was born in Devonshire in 1592 and came to this country in 1623. In 1625, he took charge of the Cape Ann settlements and with others founded the City of Salem, then called Naumkeag. He is said to have built the first house therein. In 1639, he was one of the deputies from Salem and was Justice of the Quarterly Court of Salem three years. He died in 1679. The Court record 8 June, 1671 is: "In answer to the petition of Roger Connant, a very auntient planter, the Court judgeth it meete to grant the petitioner two hundred acres of land where it is to be found out free from any former grant."

Three years later, under date of May 28, 1674 the record reads: "Layd out to Mr. Roger Conant of Beverly alyas Basse

River one parcel of land in the wilderness on the eastern side of Merrimack River, two hundred acres of land be it more or less, lying adjoining to Mr Webbs five hundred acres and begins at a great pine tree marked with E which is the N. W. Corner of Mr Edward Tyngs farme and from this pine it runs eighty three degrees and a half westward from the North 130 pole which reacheth to Beaver Brooke, and from the same pine tree it runs eleven degrees westward from the South two hundred and fivety pole, from thence it runs eighty fower degrees and a halfe westward from the South one hundred and thirty two pole. The last line is parallel to the second line & closeth to Beaver Brooke. The lines are all runne and several trees bounded with the rest well marked, it lyeth in the forme of a long square. Layd out by Jona. Danforth Surveyor 22 (3m) 1674."

No plan is on file in the State archives, but one was found in possession of the late Sewell Crosby. It was drawn by James Ingalls, Surveyor, 1744, and shows a divisional line from east to west across the middle. The southeast corner, as pointed out by Mr. Crosby, is at a rock in a wall, seven or eight rods eastwardly of the Rockwood Coburn house, which is the only dwelling on the tract. The southwest corner is at a point in the woods north of the road from Collinsville to New Boston Village, but not definitely located. The western line forms the eastern bound of the Clement farm and reaches to the brook a little north of Pelham line. The east line forms the west bound of the Dana Coburn farm. The north line is near the old Beaver brook meadows in Pelham. The tract passed into possession of the Colburns and was called the "Connet Farm."

The Symonds Grant

Samuel Symonds settled in Ipswich in 1637, and early held office in the town and colony. He was Deputy Governor, 1673-1678. The Court granted him several tracts of land, one of 500 acres being in Dracut. The record of the laying out is interesting: "7 May 1662 Layd out to the wor'pff[ll] Mr Symons five hundred acres of land, more or lesse, in the wildernes on the north of Merrimacke River lying by the rivers side right over against Mrs. Margaret Winthrop farme of three thousand acres

which lyeth in the bounds of Billirikey at the mouth of the Concord Ryver vpon a brooke called by the Indians Pophessgosquockegg, beginning about one hundred and forty sixe pole below the sayd brook and so running from Merremacke vp into the country northwest & by north about fower hundred ninety fower pole, then running Southwest and by west about on hundred and ninety fower pole, then runing downe to Merrimacke againe wch west side of it is three hundred seventy three pole, and by Merremack River upon a crooked line two hundred and twelve but upon a square line one hundred and fifty fower pole which parcell of land is about fower and seventy acres; also lajd out to him a parcell of meadow of about thirty acres lying in Small Spangs at the head of this ffarme, the which lyith wthin three quarters of a mile of the land. The whole is five hundred acres.''

The tract passed into the possession of Deane Winthrop and is still known by the name of ''Winthrops Farm.'' The name still lingers and it is not unusual to hear a farmer say that he is ''going down to Winthrops.'' The east line is marked for part of its length by a stone wall. Commencing on the river about forty rods above the mouth of Varnums brook at Bell Grove, the line comes to the highway a few rods east of the Dana Richardson house and about forty rods east of Richardsons brook. North of the road it runs through a wooded section east and northeast of Loon hill. The west line was, beyond doubt the northeasterly bound of the Jonathan Fox farm, formerly the Ephraim Richardson farm, and the southwesterly bound of the George Kelley farm. The stream which runs through this tract has been called Winthrops, Coburns, and latterly Richardsons brook. The Indian name Pophessgosquockegg, is thus defined by Gordon in his ''Early Grants.'' ''Pophessgo in an English attempt at spelling Papaska, a double hill, and Squockegg is a horrible travesty of Squamenguck, place to cure salmon.'' In one place on the records it is spelled Pohpossegosquohockegge.

Winthrop farm passed into the joint ownership of Ephraim Hildreth and Josiah Colburn, the last named settled near the brook, where his descendants remained many years, but about 1820 he sold to the Richardsons. The grant includes the Kenwood section, the farms of R. Rhomberg and Geo. Kelley, Loon

Hill and much woodland and meadow north and northeast of the hill. The thirty acres of meadow belonging to this grant laid adjoining on the north but is difficult of exact location.

The Caldicot and Negus Grants

"Laid out to Richard Colicutt of Boston 200 acres of land in the wilderness N. E. of merrimack lying upon Beaver Brook northward of Waymesick about 7 miles from Merrimack River. It lyeth upon the east side of said Beaver Brook beginning at ye mouth of a small Brook yt comes into ye said Beaver Brook, and so runs up ye said brook 230 poles bounded by ye said Brook on the west by a great white oak, from thence it runs E. N. E. 217 poles which extends about 20 pole eastward of the aforesaid little brook unto a pine marked C, from thence it runs due South 30 poles, from thence it runs So. So West two hundred and seventy six poles which closeth to the mouth of the little Brook running into Beaver Brook. J. Danforth Surveyor."

At the same time: "Laid out to Jonathan Negus of Boston 200 acres of land in the wilderness on the Nor East of Merrimack River upon a branch of Beaver Brook next adjoining to land lately layd out to Mr. Richard Collecut. It begins at a maple tree marked in a maple swamp in the South South west line of the said Collecuts farm, and so is bounded by the said farm on the west and extending 60 and 8 pole beyond the said farm due north unto a pillar of stones lying on the south side of a rocky hill & from thence it runs east by north 156 pole unto a pine marked with NN from thence it runs due south 212 pole, from thence it runs due west 100 & 90 pole to the first maple which is the closing line."

In 1682, the Negus grant was purchased by Peter Goulding of Boston, who sold it the same year but, very singularly, the tributary of Beaver Brook still retains the name of Goulding's brook, sometimes corrupted to "Golden." A plot of both Negus and Caldicot grants is on file. None of the bounds have been located, but the Caldicot grant covered the land between the two brooks at their junction, and extending nearly to the Moody Hobbs' farm on the road from Pelham Center to Windham. The Hobbs' road crosses Goulding's brook and in a southeast direction diagonally across the Negus grant to the Gage Hill road.

There are probably no houses on either grant. Gage's or Island Pond brook runs through the Negus grant which was at one time owned by Thomas Robins and the brook was then called Robins' brook.

The Grant of 1693

The settlers upon the grants near the river and west of Beaver brook had now obtained title to much of the land on that side of the brook, besides about a thousand acres on the east side of the brook. Between these properties was an irregularly shaped tract of many acres as yet claimed by no one, but which the settlers were obliged to traverse in going from their homes to their lands farther from the river. With a shrewd foresight they now took measures to secure this tract for themselves, and the fourteen heads of families thereupon presented a petition to the General Court. The petition:

"Humbly sheweth That ye petitioners have been att great cost and paines in settling themselves upon their present Improvements wch att their owne proper charge they purchased without haveing one foot thereof given them, besides have greatly Suffered in their persons and Estates by the heathen in the Last and the present warr, by fires, Killing and wounding of Sundry of their neighbours and otherwise They have been Greatly Impoverished. And there being a tract or parcell of barren Wast or Woodland unimproved and not as yett Taken up by any, lyeing between the Lands and meadows of yr petitioners containeing about two hundred Acres extending the whole Length of their Lands as more particularly appears by the Draught thereof annexed thereto. And yr petitioners haveing noe outlett or commons to their Lands for firewood or pasturing for their Cattle Finds it to be an Incredible Inconvenience to their Improvements.

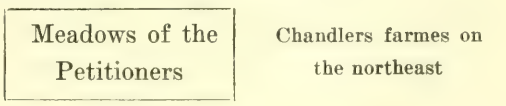
Your Petitioners Therefore humbly prayes that yor Excellency and this honrd Court will please take the premise's into consideration and favor them, soe as that the said Tract of Land may be Granted and Confirmed to them for the enlargement of Their streightened accommodations.

And yr petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Thomas Varnum	Daniel Rolfe
Edward Coburne	Thomas Richardson
John Coburne Senr.	Thomas Vernon
Thomas Coburne Senr	John Vernon
Daniel Cobourne	Joseph Vernon
Ezra Cobourne	John Cobourne junr
Joseph Cobourn	Thomas Cobourne junr''

The Court granted this petition Nov. 27, 1693. The three Vernon names were afterward erased and written Varnum in another hand.

With the petition the following plan was filed



Northside

This small parcell is the land petitioned for.



Merrimack River on the South

There is probably an error in the copying of the drawing as Chandler's farms would lie on the northwest in Dunstable. The ''500 acres of Chelmsford land'' was the Indian Reservation, already described. The 200 acres for which they petitioned was a very elastic term. It covered an ungranted tract adjoining their homesteads on the north, all the land between Long pond and Beaver brook, also all of Collinsville east of the brook, with New Boston district as far east and north as the lines of the Conant, Tyng and Billerica grants. Its south line would be near the paper mill and Meadow bridge. It was long known as the ''Lands of the Fourteen Petitioners.'' This was divided among them. The last division appears to have been made in 1718, and lotted out all of the Collinsville and New Boston land,

and some of the Long Pond lots, besides some of the meadow land on Beaver brook north of the Webb grant, purchased of Solomon Wood. The Long pond lots reached from the pond to Beaver brook and contained thirty acres each, northward of the Batter Grant.

The Reserved Lands

No grants of land were made by the General Court in the territory of Dracut later than 1693. There still remained a large area of ungranted or wilderness land. In the resolve of the court granting the petitioners leave to lay out their township, we find the following condition, viz: "And that if any land shall happen to fall within the bounds aforesaid that hath not been heretofore granted, it shall be reserved to be disposed of by this Government."

Thus the town could occupy or dispose of this land only with the consent of the Court. There were reasons why the town should have this consent. The people wanted to build a meeting-house and support a minister, and revenues derived from this land directly and indirectly would prove of much benefit in the establishment of a church. Another reason was that they wanted to control the disposition of the land. Undesirable persons or squatters, as they were called, could occupy the land if unclaimed while if the town held the ownership legal means could be taken to eject them. No action was taken in relating to the granting of the lands until 1709. This antedates the town records by one year and is all that is known of the action of the town from 1702 to 1710, as all records of the intervening time have disappeared.

Under date of February 6, 1709, it is recorded that John Varnum, who was town clerk, by order of the town, petitioned the General Court for permission to dispose of the land. It is directed: "To his Excellency Joseph Dudley Esq. Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief, The Hon.ble the Council and Representatives in General Court assembled Feb. pro. 1709. The petition of John Varnum of Dracut within the County of Middlesex and others the Freeholders and Inhabitants of the

said town Humbly sheweth etc'' Following the statement found in the petition and survey at the time of the incorporation of the town the body of the petition is:

''Now so it may please your Excellency & this Hon.ble Assembly pursuant to a Clause in the aforesaid Grant that the Inhabitants of the said Land assist in the maintenance of the Ministry at Chelmsford as at present they do, until they are provided with a Minister as the law directs, they have accordingly paid the Ministry dues there, But being desirous to settle the Ministry & Gospel Ordinances among themselves as in duty bound, for their own benefit and advantage & the Benefit of their Families & posterity, have for two or three years past had some young Schollars, Candidates for the Ministry to preach unto them, and at present have young Mr. Cheever of Marblehead with them attending that Work with general acceptance and approbation & have good hopes they shall obtain him to settle among them if they can give him Encouragement. They therefore humbly pray, that it would please this Hon.ble Assembly for the better Enabling them so to do to Order and Grant that the reserved Land lying within the Boundaries aforesaid mentioned in the afore recited Order may be alotted to & among such as shall come to settle with them, as the Freeholders & proprietors may think fit.

JOHN VARNUM''

The answer was favorable and the following order returned:

''Feb 6 1709 In Council, Read and Ordered that Colo. Jonathan Tyng Capt. John Lane Capt. Edward Johnson & Lieut. Hill with such as shall be added to them by the Representatives, be a committee to make enquiry into the Quantity of the Reserved Lands mentioned in the within recited order & make Report thereof to this Court at their next sitting & what number of Inhabitants it may be capable of entertaining to make a Strong town.

Sent down in concurrence ISA ADDINGTON Sec

In the House of Representatives Sep'r 7 1709 Read & Concurred & that Mr. John Stevens be added to the said Committee.

JOHN CLARK Speaker
J. WILLARD Sec'ry."

The report of the committee is indicated by the following action of the Court as copied in the book of records of the town: "26 June 1710. Ordered that the eleven thousand acres of Reserved lands reported by the committee be added to the town of Dracut."

Apparently the committee was instructed to lay out lots. Under date of November 27, 1710, we have: "The committee appointed agreed to lay out 15 lots and to lay out to each lot 15 acres of meadow or good swamp land to make meadow and to make up the lots as soon as any persons shall appear to take them up."

Under date of May 15, 1712, in a report made to the committee by Joseph Varnum, Ephraim Hildreth and Samuel Danforth, who had been selected to lay out the lots it is recorded: "We have laid out 300 acres for the ministry and one lot for the minister on the north of Beaver Brook near Tony Brook. There is about 250 acres laid out on the west of Gouldings for the 7 lots upon Gumpas to make them equal with the River lots."

The committee made a further report to the General Court, June 13, 1712:

"We have as report followeth laid out 300 acres for the ministry in said town, and 50 acres more adjoining unto it for the first settled minister in said towne, because we could find no convenient place for him in The Reserved lands for the settling of a minister, the former proprietors out of their own proper right have given 30 acres of land for a house lot to the first settled minister. Also we gave orders for the laying out of 200 acres for the school in said town, and we have laid 23 house lots in the reserved lands 15 of these we laid out in a small tract of land which lyeth on the great river below, 15 acres of meadow or muck meadow to each lot, and these lots ordered to pay 17 shillings a piece yearly to the support of the

ministry & 40 shillings each for the defraying charges expended and shall be expended. We have laid out 8 lots more remote which lots we order to pay 10 shillings yearly to the support of the ministry in said town & 20 shillings each lot for defraying charges. Further we have granted to the several 15 acres of meadow land the full 30th part of the Reserved lands in said town proportional for small lots. Agreed and concluded that no persons shall make sale of his or their lot or lots taken up as above said without leave first had and obtained power from the General Courts committee then being or the selectmen of the said Town of Dracut or the major part of them, and that these residents or said proprietors as to the selling of the above said shall cause and determine their being accepted and approved of as settled inhabitants of the said Town of Dracut.

JONA TYNG
JOHN LANE
JOHN STEARNS."

The records of the town are supplemented by a small volume known as the Proprietors' records, still preserved among the town archives in its original form, bound in boards and covered with sheepskin. The opening of these tracts to the settlers attracted the attention of citizens of the towns already in existence and the committee was obliged to exercise its judgment in the acceptance of these parties who, it was hoped, would add materially to the numbers and welfare of the town. In the majority of cases the families who came were desirable and while some are known only by name to the present generation, others have remained and been instrumental in the upbuilding of the town. The committee did not allow color to debar any one from becoming a citizen if he appeared desirable in other respects. One negro, to whom reference will be made, was accepted and granted several lots.

These lot owners were called Proprietors and the old book at the town office, to which reference has been made, is called the Proprietors' Record and the old road on Marsh Hill which has been discontinued as a highway is called the Proprietors' road. Many of these lots were bounded by marked trees or heaps

of stones which disappeared long ago and only the general location can be determined. The first entry on the Proprietors' book is as follows:

"We do except of ye parsons within named, to be Proprietors of the Reserved Land in the Township of Dracutt and do order their Loots and thir Nams to be entered in the Book of records for Dracutt accordingly, Jonathan Tyng, John Lane, John Stearns.

This is a trew Coppy of the General Corts order.

Wittnas Ouer Hands

JOSEPH VARNUM
EZEKIEL CHEEVER
JAMES FALES"

"These are the names of the men that have the Loots now in possession with ye consent of ye General Corts Committee and sum that have sould to others with ye consent of ye Selectmen of the Town of Dracut. Selectmen: John Varnum, Joseph Colbon, Ebenezer Goodhue.

Benjamin Barans 1 Ebenezer Goodhue 2 Ezekiel Cheever 3 James Colbon 4 Benjamin Hoore 5 Ebenezer Wright 6 Onesimus (Onesiphorus) Marsh 7 Benjamin Barans 8 Solomon Wood 9 Josiah Richardson 10 Nathaniel Fox 11 Anthony Neggerow 12 Ezekiel Cheevers 13 William Reed 14 Nathaniel Cheevers 15 Samuel Prime 16 John Higginson. These are the fifteen that Lye between mr. Belchers Farme and mr. Winthrips Farme and every man's nam is seet to his Loot. Samuel Prime, his Loot Lyes below mr. Winthrip's Farme Lying on Merrimack river. John Higginson's Loot lyes on merrimack river below samuel Prime's Loot. Ministers Loot and ministers Farme lies at Gompos on ye north sid of bever Brook. Solomon Wood's Loot lies on Gompos Brooke. George Brouen 2 Joseph Crosby 3 Ezekiel (Cheevers) 4 Callup (Caleb) Balle 5 John Hayward Cheyney Flage these two Loot Lye on the north sid of Bever Brook west of the ministers Farme. Solomon Wood, his Loot Lyes on ye east Side of Bever Brook and on ye north sid of ye Colbons ould Meddowes. John Barans, hesacaah Townasane, Joseph Whittier these three Loots lye north of mr.

Winterips Farme.'' These are recorded in the Proprietors Record which bears the following endorsement: Dracutt March ye 5th 1733-4. This Book Delivered To Nathaniel Fox Proprietors Clark To Record in the Proprietors Book all that is Written in the within Written Book Delivered To him By us the Subscribers.

JOSEPH VARNUM
EPHRAIM CURTIS } Committee''
NATHANIEL FOX

The record of the river lots was later placed upon the town book, which gives the number of acres to each lot varying from 36 to 60 acres and totalling about 700 acres. Their dimensions are only to be ascertained from subsequent deeds of transfer. Many of these lots changed hands several times and became divided. A brief notice will be given of the original proprietors and their lots as far as known. As before stated, the owners were required to pay 17 shillings yearly.

The first lot was laid out to Benjamin Barans or Barron. The family was here at the time of the Revolution, when five of the names appear on the rolls of American Soldiers. The lot passed in 1750 into possession of Richard Thissell or Thistle, who settled upon it, and his descendants remained there many years. It was bounded on the west by the line of the Russell Grant or practically Beacon street. Laid out as 44 acres it was sold to Thissell as 50, showing the liberal measurements of the times. It bounded 30 rods on the river and extended 400 rods northward, or nearly to the junction of Beacon and Willard streets where it was 9 rods in width.

The second lot, Ebenezer Goodhue's, contained 46 acres. He has direct descendants in town at the preesnt time. The third lot was Ezekiel Cheever's of Salem, and contained 46 acres. This family was prominent in Dracut, the last of the name, Hannah Cheever, passing away in 1894 at the old Cheever homestead, then owned and occupied by Charles Hazen Stickney. The fourth lot was James Colburn's, who had 46 acres. He was a grandson of Edward, who came from Ipswich. Benjamin Hoar of Concord had the fifth lot, 45 acres, but he early sold to Benjamin Barron.

Parts of the second, third, fourth and fifth lots passed into the possession of Benjamin Wood and his sons, a prominent family in the town. Ebenezer Wright of Chelmsford had the sixth lot, 46 acres; he also bought some of the other lots. He appears to have been a resident of Dracut for a time, but sold his property and in 1723 was a resident of Dunstable. The seventh lot, 50 acres, was laid out to Onesiphorous Marsh (called Onesimus on the record). He was from Bradford, but settled in Dracut on other land which had been laid out to him. The eighth lot was laid out to Benjamin Barron, owner of the first lot. It contained 60 acres. It passed into possession of John Barron of Concord, who removed here and probably settled on the north end of the lot, and was succeeded by his son, Eliseus, who lived near the northerly end of Tenth street. The ninth lot was laid out to Solomon Wood of Bradford, who had other lots laid out to him, all of which he sold and never became a resident of the town so far as known.

The tenth lot was laid out to Josiah Richardson and contained 50 acres. He was from Chelmsford and died in 1711, and the following year his son Josiah, was granted permission by the town to settle on the lot. In 1727, he purchased of Jonathan Belcher a large tract of land in the former Russell Grant in Centralville, on which he is known to have resided. He is said to have sold one half of this lot in 1712 to his cousin, Joseph, son of Thomas Richardson, who had a ferry across the Merrimack. If so, he did not retain it very long, for he was a resident in 1715 of Bradford. The eleventh lot of 50 acres was laid out to Nathaniel Fox of Concord. From the town records we have the following: "July ye last day 1714 Mr. Fox came to Dracut." He was the ancestor of the Fox family which has numbered amongst its members many worthy citizens. His river lot passed through many hands and was at one time called the John Cheever farm. The twelfth lot was owned by Anthony, the Negro, who exchanged it with Ezekiel Cheever for a lot of 50 acres on the Cedar pond road, or Haverhill path as it was sometimes called.

The thirteenth lot was Ezekiel Cheever's, 46 acres. The fourteenth lot was William Reed's of Chelmsford. The fifteenth river lot was laid out to Nathaniel Cheever, 36 acres. He ob-

tained the ownership of the southern portion of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth lots which, with the southerly part of the fifteenth, he sold to Josiah Richardson of the fourth generation and owner of the tenth lot. His purchase was inherited by his son, Ephraim. It was long known as the Ephraim Richardson farm, being owned by three generations of that name and later known as the Jonathan Fox farm, now owned by his son, John C. Fox.

As previously stated in the report of the committee, 15 acres of meadow were granted to each lot and later other tracts were granted to these proprietors. Eastward of these fifteen lots was the grant to Samuel Symons (Winthrop farm), already described. Below this grant on the river was a lot of 60 acres laid out to Samuel Prime of Rowley, who had, in addition, other tracts of land laid out to him, some of which adjoined his 60 acres. He sold his land to Joseph Varnum, whose son, Samuel, later married Prime's daughter, Mary. Joseph Varnum had other land laid out to him in this vicinity and acquired more by purchase. In 1737, he deeded to his son Samuel: "700 acres in the easterly part of Dracut commonly called and known as the Prime lot, bounded south by Merrimack river, west by Winthrop farm and by land I have given my son John Varnum." A plan of this farm is on file. It laid over two hundred rods on the river, from the line of the Winthrop farm on the west to the Higginson line at Deer Jump. It was somewhat fan shaped and reached northward over a mile to a point north of the nickel mine, including Belle Grove and the Old Varnum farms on the Methuen road.

Next, below Varnum's land on the river, was a lot of 200 acres laid out to the Rev. John Higginson of Salem, a very scholarly man and one of the best writers of his time, as well as an eloquent preacher. Some poet has written:—

> "With him Gospel and Deeds each had its column,
> His head an index of the Sacred Volume,
> His very name a title page; and next
> His life a commentary on the text."

In 1742, the lot was purchased by Timothy Parker, thus introducing that numerous family into Dracut. The lot was

bounded on the river 180 rods from Varnum line at Deer Jump to the east line of the town and extending northward one mile to the nickel mine. Thence the line ran northeasterly parallel with the river to the town line. Thus briefly stated is the names of the original lot owners in that portion of Dracut on the river through which is the electric road over which the cars pass between Lowell and Lawrence.

The tract of two hundred acres laid out for the support of schools has been identified. It extended from the Cedar pond road on Marsh Hill southward to Fox Avenue, and from Belcher's east line which was in the vicinity of the old highway west of Dracut reservoir, eastward to the J. Wallace Thissell house, now owned by Henry Fox. The northwest corner was near the house of Eugene C. Fox. It was divided into fifteen lots. The first three covered the Samuel Worcester farm now owned by D. Stedman Fox. The Hildreth and Fred Fox farms lying on the east were for the most part included in this tract. The Cedar pond (now Peters pond) road is at present a right of way, it being superseded as a highway when the present Marsh Hill road was opened; it runs at right angles with the old road and is known as The Proprietors' road. On the northwest of Beaver brook in the triangle between the brook and Dunstable line were laid out the seven Gumpus or Gumpsted lots of fifty acres each, as mentioned. According to the record of 1710, the owners were: George Brown and Joseph Crosby of Billerica Caleb Ball John Hayward and Cheney Flagg of Concord. They disposed of their lots. Zechariah Colburn purchased Flagg's lot and Benjamin Richardson became the owner of Hayward's. They laid north of Collinsville.

Referring to the report made by the men who laid out the lots, we find a lot of 300 acres and another of 50 acres north of Beaver brook near Tony brook. They seem to have been considered as lying in the Gumpus district, but if they were near or opposite Tony brook, which enters Beaver brook from the east a few rods below the Abbott bridge, which is the stone bridge south of Pelham centre, they may have included the south part of Pelham which lies west of Beaver brook and extended north to the center of the town. These were the ministers' farm and ministers' lot. In the same report we find "8 lots more remote,"

but they cannot be identified. In 1716, the Proprietors were desirous of dividing the remainder of the reserved lands and petitioned Jonathan Tyng, a Justice of the Peace, to call a meeting of the Proprietors, which he proceeded to do. The warrant is given on account of its being a literary curiosity and shows the manner of writing and spelling which was common two centuries ago. No marks of punctuation seem to have been used:

"To Capt Joseph Varnum of Dracutt in the County of Middlesex yeoman greeting whereas application to me Jonathan Tyng one of his majisties justes of the peace within sd County By five of the Propriators of the common or undivided Land of sd Town Praying for a warrent to Call a Proprietor meeting Showing By Sundry Weighty Reasons That There is Great nesesity of the same for the ordering and Desposing of the Common Land as aforesd.

I Do Therefore Pursuant To The Direction of the Law appoint the Last Thursday of March Currant for the Propriety as aforesd To meet at the house of the A Bove sd Capt Varnum at Two of the oclock in the afternoon For the Ends Following.

To chuse a Propriaty Clark according to Law. (2) To chuse a committee or Agents To mannag in Behalf of the Proprietors. (3) To a Gree how to Despose of aney Part of sd Land as Shall Be Thought best when mett Together. (4) To agree how to call a propriators meatings for the futer I Do also order and Direct that you the a Bove sd Joseph Varnum Do Post up a Copey or Copies of these orders is some publick Place or Places of the sd Town Fourteen Days Before sd meating That all the Propriators may be Duly Notified To meat For The ends aforesd hereof Fail not Dated March ye 14th 1715-16

JONATHAN TYNG, Justis Peace"

The return of the warrant is brief.

"Dracut March ye 29 1715-16 In Observation To The within Writt I have Notified the Proprietors of the undivided land in Dracut as within Mentioned To meat Time and place

JOSEPH VARNUM."

A record of the meeting may be found in the Proprietors' Record book at the Dracut Town office. It is here reproduced, a few of the legal terms being omitted for the sake of brevity.

"At a Ginerall meating of the Propriators of the common and undivided Land Beloning to the Township of Dracutt convened the Last thursday in March 1716 By Vertue of a warrant from the honorable Colonel Jonathan Tyng Esqr Justic of the Peace in Middx Diricted to Cap^{tt} Joseph Varnum Bareing Dait ye 14th Day of March 1715-16 the Propriators Being mett at the House of Cap^{tt} Joseph Varnum at the Time and Place Prefixed in the sd worron.

Made choice of Ezekiel Cheever of Salem for the moderator of this meating to mannage the several things contained in sd warrant.

1ly Coarsen for a Clark Nathaniel Fox.

2ly Chosen for a committee as they shall agree upon Mr. George Brown of Bilricah Capt Joseph Varnum Ezekiel Chever Mr Nathaniel Fox Mr. James Fails.

3ly Voted this committee now chosen shall go upon the undivided Land that is not yet laid out and Lay it out into Two Squadrons and the Land that Lyeth nearest Vnto the River Shall Be Laid out for the Lots that are Laid out upon the River and that Land that Lyeth next the Gumset Lotts Shall Be Laid out for the Gumsett Lotts a Lowing them the Land that was over for them which is not yet Laid out so answer the 13 acres that was Laid out the Each River Lott.

4ly Voted that there shall be a considerable Quantite of upland Laid out by this Commity unto each mans medow of that Land that Lyeth aBout his meadows for his Better accommodation according to the quantity of meadows that each man haith and so much upland ay man haith Laid out to his meadow shall Be Reackond to him as so much of his share of undivided Land.

5ly Voted that when the Land is Laid out into Squadrons then there shall Be an Hundred and Thirty acres Laid out for each mans Lott of more if the Committee shall judge it best to lay out more at first and all the Rest of the Vndivided Land Which Remains after the meadows are accomedaited with what

the committee shall judge suitable and conveanant to Be Laid out to them and the 130 acres Laid out each mans Lott and all that Remains shall Be Laid out at the next laying out Be it more or less.

6ly Voted that this committee or the major Peart of them are fully Impowered To Layout all the Vndivided Land as soon as convenently Be Done and they shall Be aLowed four shillings a Day By the Propriators for the servise herein.

7ly Voted this committee are Impowered to sell some of this Land that is not yet Divided To pay the charge of Laying out this Land if they see cause and the sale to Be Posted up in some publick place.

8ly Voted That For The Time To come any two of the committee and the Clark shall have Power to call a Propriator meating By setting up a Notification in some Publick Place fourteen Days Before sd meating.

9ly Voted that this committee shall have Power to imploy the Surveir or artis in Laying out this Land so much as shall Be needful & the Propriators to Bear the charge of it. 10ly Voted that this committee shall Have full Power To Lay out what High Ways thay shall judge needful 11ly It is votted and aGreed upon that no man shall Debar an other From coming to his medows But Every man shall have sufficiant Liberty To come to his meadows For moing and makeing and careing of his hay. These are the several things that were a Greed upon at this meating and Uoted With a clear and unanimous Uote.

Atest Ezekiel Cheever moderator of sd meating a Trew Copey ATeste Nathaniel Fox.

Propriety Clerke."

The remainder of the book contains records of lots of land laid out and the locating of roads. Many of the lots are impossible to locate and a general description only can be given. The expressions "for quantity and quality" are often used, which implies that the number of acres laid out to a proprietor were governed somewhat by the value. With arable land, a generous tract of meadow or swamp that could be made into meadow, was provided. With these a liberal amount of woodland was assigned, which though not as valuable was necessary

for their wood and timber. The English government reserved every straight pine tree above a certain size, marking it with a broad arrow. These were to furnish masts for the Royal Navy, and a penalty was attached for their destruction except by officers who had authority to cut them. This may to some extent account for the fact that so much oak timber was used for frames for buildings.

Northward of the lots described as lying on the river and east of the Russell Grant, the line, as stated, crossing Centralville Heights and near Dracut Center Church building, was a large territory. The 200 acre lot has been described. Opposite this, on the south of Fox avenue, was a tract of 49 acres, divided into eight lots. It extended from the old highway opposite Albert Fox's house, now Chapman street, to the line of the farm formerly owned by Calvin Richardson.

Eastward of these lots and extending to the east line of the town, there were lots assigned to different ones, amongst them Nathaniel Fox, whose descendants in the seventh generation occupy them, William Colburn, who lived near the Wallace Thissell farm; Ephraim Curtis, who lived at the farm now owned by Mr. Daigle; Joseph Varnum and Onesiphorous Marsh, who settled on their lots. Commencing at the line of the Billerica Grant, near Frank P. Fox's, and running eastwardly over Marsh and Burns' Hills to the vicinity of the Corliss Smith farm, was a range of twelve or more lots. They were bounded south on the Cedar Pond road, which is north of the Dracut reservoir and north on the Colburn New Meadow Farm, which was the meadows lying north of Marsh Hill.

Beginning at the west end, the first lot of 50 acres was laid out to Nathaniel Fox and Onesiphorous Marsh. The last named evidently sold to Fox, where descendants are now in possession; it included the Darius L. Fox farm. Then in succession from west to east the proprietors were John Barron, Benjamin Wood, Anthony Negro, Ephraim Curtis, Ezekiel Cheever, and Ebenezer Thornton. The last named had the seventh and eighth lots of 62 acres each. Beyond these lots the owners were Cheever, Thornton, Marsh and Josiah Richardson. The seventh and eighth lots laid out to Thornton passed in 1789 with some of the other lots on the west to the Peabody family. The ninth lot

came into possession of Ephraim Hall about the time of the Revolution and was long owned by his grandson, the late Ira Hall; it is now owned by Bert A. Cluff. A tract of woodland near or on Burns Hill is still known as Thornton Woods. The twelfth lot was purchased in 1729 by Joseph Chamberlain. Directly westward of the residence of Corliss Smith may be seen the remains of an old cellar where stood the Chamberlain house. The Chamberlain lot, when purchased, was bounded eastward by the "homestead of Anthony Negro."

East and northeast from this point to the east line of the town and embracing Cedar (now Peters) pond were many lots which cannot now be identified. Very singularly the name of Cedar pond is still given to a little pond lying north of Peters' pond. It is possible that in former times it was a part of the larger pond. In this vicinity a tract of 15 acres of meadow was laid out to Rev. John Higginson, who had the river lot already described. It was long known as the Higginson meadows and lies in Pelham, south of the road leading from Pelham center to Methuen. From these meadows flows a brook called at that time Dennison's, but later West or Bartlett's brook. Northward of the present state line was a range of lots extending from "Colburns Old Meadows and T Cove" on the west to the east line of the town. Colburns Old Meadows were north of New Boston Village and T Cove was a well-known bound and seems to have been the name applied to the easterly end of the Old Meadows, about a fourth of a mile west of the County road through Pelham, now Bridge street.

The southerly bound of this range of lots was the Coburn New Meadow Farm, already described as lying north of Marsh hill. The northerly bound cannot be definitely located, but as several lots abutted on Island Pond on the north, it shows that the range reached from the Old Meadows in a northeasterly direction and covered all of school district No. 5, called the Currier district in Pelham. These were owned by those men already mentioned, viz: Thornton, Curtis, Wood, Barron, and Marsh to which may be added the names of Nathaniel Cheever and William Colburn, and the tract comprised at least 800 acres. The greater part of this land was sold by the proprietors to investors who were not residents of the town and later it came

into possession of actual settlers. Northeast of Island pond a lot of 300 acres had been laid out to Jeremiah Belcher on his petition by right of an Indian deed to his father, reference to which may be found in the chapter on Indian History. Northward of the range described was upland and meadow called the Tony Brook lots. The brook, sometimes called Mirey Brook, rises east of the Asa Carlton farm and runs northwesterly through the Hobbs farm entering Beaver brook a short distance below the stone bridge south of Pelham center called Abbott bridge.

Northeast of Tony brook, a lot of 250 acres was laid out to Ebenezer Wright and 73 acres to Benjamin Wood. These would include the Atwood farms, east of Pelham center. Lots are mentioned as lying on Island pond brook which is the outlet of Island pond and is known as Gage's brook. With the exception of the small grants to Caldicot and Negus, the latter called Goulding Farm, all of the territory north of the tracts described was reserved land and was laid out in lots. They were usually located with reference to certain natural features as Goulding's Pond, Goulding's Brook, Ledge of Rock's Pond and the Distracted Meadows. The latter are partly in the Gage Hill district and partly over the Windham line. Goulding's Pond is in Windham and is called Cobbett's Pond. It is one of the sources of Goulding's brook which flows into Beaver brook near Pelham center. Ledge of Rock's Pond has been called Goulding's but is now Simpson's Pond.

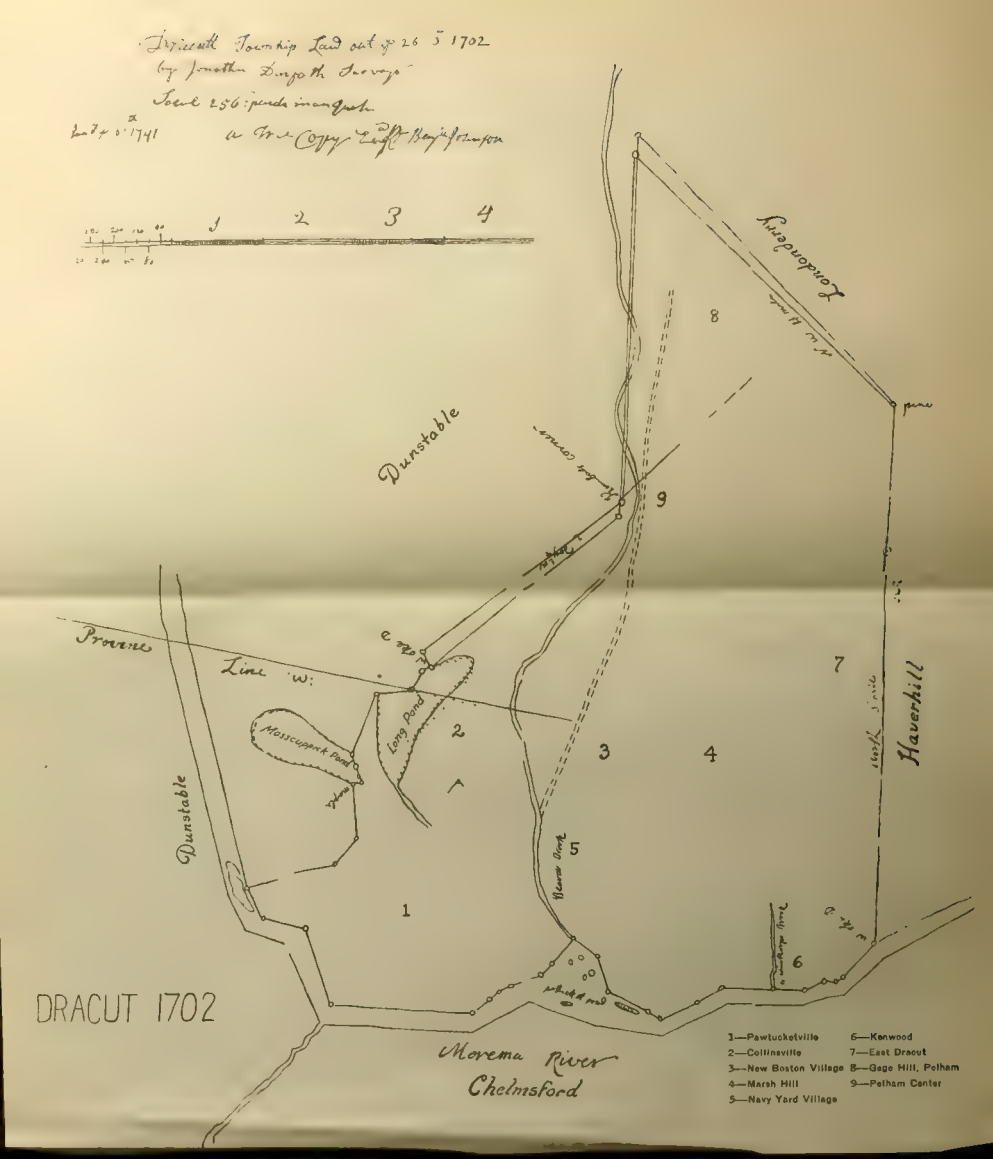
CHAPTER V

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROVINCE LINE

THE first charter of the Massachusetts Colony given by King Charles I under date of March 1, 1628-9, granted to the Colony "all that part of New England lying between three miles to the north of the Merrimack and three miles to the south of the Charles river and of every part thereof in the Massachusetts Bay; and in length between the described breadth from the Atlantic Ocean to the South Sea." At that time little was known of the interior of the country and the king and his councillors labored under two errors. The first was the assumption that the continent was narrow, as in Central America. They supposed that the Pacific Ocean or South Sea as they called it would be reached about where the Middle States are located. If this grant was accepted as stated it would give to the state its present width but would be 3000 miles long, including a portion of every state now lying west of Massachusetts in this latitude, between the two oceans.

The second error laid in the supposition that the course of the Merrimack river was like that of the Charles river, practically east and west not realizing that for a large part of its course it ran north and south. This error was the cause of a controversy between Massachusetts and New Hampshire, which has ended only in recent years. As the true course of the Merrimack became better known, Massachusetts claimed her territory to extend to three miles north of the source of the river and the General Court in 1652, appointed a commission to ascertain that point. The order appointing a commission was in part as follows:

"31d. 3m. 1652. Concerning the north lyne of this jurisdiccon itt was this day voted vppon pvsall of our charter, that the extent of our lyne is to be from the northernmost parte of the River Merremacke and three miles more north, where it is to be found be it a hundred miles more or lesse from the sea and thence vppon a straight lyne east and west to each sea."


Dracut Township Laid out A° 26 & 1702
by Jonathan Danforth Surveyor
Contains 256 Square Rods
Dec 7th 1741
a True Copy Test Benja Thompson
1 2 3 4
Londonderry
Dunstable
Province Line W:
Massicuppenk Pond
Long Pond
Dunstable
Haverhill
Merrimack River
Chelmsford
DRACUT 1702
1—Pawtucketville
2—Collinsville
3—New Boston Village
4—Marsh Hill
5—Navy Yard Village
6—Kenwood
7—East Dracut
8—Gage Hill, Pelham
9—Pelham Center

Two men were appointed, viz.: Capt. Simon Willard, who had fought in the Colonial service against the Indians and who was an ancestor in a direct line of the writer, and to whom many in eastern Massachusetts may trace their descent, and Capt. Edward Johnson, an influential man in the colony. These commissioners with surveyors and guides ascended the river and located its source at a place called by the Indians Aquedahtan, now known as the Weirs. At this point they found a large granite boulder in the bed of the stream near the outlet of the lake on which they cut the letters

EI SW
WP IOHN
ENDICVT
Gov.

Bearing in mind that at that time the letters I and J were the same letter and that WP probably meant worshipful, we may read it Edward Johnson, Simon Willard, Worshipful John Endicott, Governor. This stone and inscription being later covered with water, it was forgotten until 1833, when excavating for a dam it was recovered. A point three miles north terminated at a pine tree known as Endicott's Pine, and here the commissioners located the northern boundary of Massachusetts. According to their interpretation this would give to this state the larger part of what is now New Hampshire with a considerable part of York county in Maine.

"The New Hampshire grantees placed a different construction upon the language of the charter and claimed that the northern line could not be in any place more than three miles to the north of the middle of the river. The territory therefore lying between these extremes became 'disputed territory.'"

"Subsequently, in 1667, at a hearing before the King Charles II and Council, the agents for Massachusetts, by advice, so far modified their claim as to disclaim all right of jurisdiction beyond three miles north of the river according to its course, that is, their line should run parallel with the river from its mouth to Endicott's rock and thence due north to Endicott's Tree, and thence due west to the South Sea. It was determined

that they had a right as far as the river extended. Massachusetts, however, continued to retain jurisdiction over those parts of the towns already granted, which were more than three miles north of the Merrimack, of which New Hampshire continued to complain." ("History of Haverhill.")

In 1692, under William III, a new charter was granted to Massachusetts, which defined the northern bound as "extending from the great river commonly called Monomack, alias Merrimack on the north part and from three miles northward of the said river to the western sea."

"About the year 1720, New Hampshire began to claim that the line should commence at the point three miles north of the *mouth* of Merrimack river and from thence run due west to the South Sea. With the setting up of this new claim commenced a series of disputes, contentions, and suits that lasted nearly a third of a century." ("History of Haverhill.") In 1731, a royal order was issued, referring the matter to a board of commissioners. This board met at Hampton and after several weeks of discussion agreed upon the east bounds of New Hampshire, a different matter in dispute, but not upon the southern bounds and by agreement this question was submitted directly to the King, at that time George II. It was not until August 5, 1740, that a decree was issued by the king and council which ordered: "That the northern boundary of the Province of Massachusetts Bay is and be a similar curve line pursuing the course of Merrimac River at three miles distance on the north side thereof beginning at the Atlantic Ocean and ending at a point due north of a place in the plan returned by the commissioners called Patucket Falls and a straight line drawn from thence due west across sd river till it meets His Majestys other Governments." ("Hist. of Haverhill.")

Again the want of information of the course of the river led the king and council into error, they failing to understand the southerly trend of the river from its mouth to Pawtucket Falls. By this decision New Hampshire was given more than she had ever claimed. Massachusetts feeling herself unjustly treated refused to join in the survey of the line, and Governor Belcher, as authorized by the decree appointed George Mitchell and Richard Hazen, spelled Hazzen, surveyors. Selecting a point at the

bend of the Merrimack river below Pawtucket Falls, they measured a line three miles north which terminated at a large pine tree at the northern end of the farm formerly owned by the late Zechariah Coburn, now in possession of James W. Mozley. This was known as Mitchell's Boundary Pine and was the point from which the two surveyors started out. Mitchell surveying the line parallel with the river from this point to the sea, and Hazen running the line west.

The diary of the latter surveyor has been preserved and we copy that portion of it relating to Dracut.

"Saturdayy March 21 1741 Concluded at what part of the falls to begin to measure a due North line (the place concluded on being directly opposite to Tyngs Saw Mill and called the Great Bunt). The said Mitchell set forward on his Course & measured the said three miles which ended about fourteen poles Southerly of Colburns Old Meadow & near the Easterly end of it, where the said Mitchell caused a pitch pine to be marked and erected a pillar of stones around the same tree & then we parted and I set forward on my Course from sd Pine Tree a course due West or according to my instructions, that is West 10° North variation allowed pr order of the Governor and Council and the same night measured 1^{m} 16^{p} to Beaver River. This line crossed Conants Farm (see Early Grants) and meadow and Nathaniel Clements lot. Monday Mar 23. We began to measure a little after sunrise and the same day went on our course 4^{m} 24^{p}. In this days travel at 40^{h} 40^{p} from Beaver River we crossed the path which leads from Dracutt Meeting house to that part of the town called Gumpass at which path William Richardsons house bore north of us and distant about 40 poles, and Nathaniel Clements Southerly and distant about 60 poles."

Nathaniel Clement was the great great grandfather of the late Asa Clement, and his house was located on the slope of the hill south of the present Clement buildings. Capt. William Richardson was the great grandfather of the late Honorable George F. Richardson of Lowell, and his house stood on the right hand side of the road beyond the Clement farm and north of the Pelham line. The highway now called Mammoth Road was

then called the "Path," as the highway was not laid out until 1792; while Dracut Meeting House refers to the first church structure erected in Dracut and stood on Varnum avenue. The Peter Coburn house, which is the old house south of the Clement farm and still in existence, was undoubtedly the first house built in this neighborhood and the "path" led past these houses. We quote from the diary: "At the end of 274 poles from the path we came to a pond called Long Pond the general bearings whereof were North and South, in our way crossing said Richardsons land and Clements. The pond was 74 poles over and on the west side of it Dracut and Nottingham join together." The diary records the survey which ended April 16th at Hudson River. In several places reference is made to the snow being three feet deep and at one place near five feet, yet at the end of the diary he records: "The weather proved so favorable that we never stopt in the woods for any foul weather nor did we make a camp any one Night & Stretch[d] our Blankets but three times all the Journey but Lodged without any Covering Save the Heavens and Our Blankets."

All records or marks of the exact spot on the Merrimack river where they started are lost, but according to the journal, they surveyed, a line running three miles north of a place called the Great Bunt, which is the broad expanse of the river west of the mouth of Beaver brook below Pawtucket falls, long known as Pawtucket Pond. By the establishment of this new province line the town lost about half of its territory and with other towns similarly affected felt much aggrieved. At a town meeting held November 26, 1741, it was voted: "That a petition be preferred to ye Kings most excellent majesty setting forth our distressed circumstances and praying that that part of sd town that is taken away by said line may be annexed to ye sd province of Massachusetts Bay, and that Messrs. John Varnum, Darius Richardson and Nathaniel Fox or any two of them be a committee and be fully empowered to sign one such petition and prefer it to ye Court of Great Britian."

It was first necessary to present the petition to the General Court for its sanction. The Court, while sympathizing with the town, did not grant their request, but appointed a committee who reported as follows: "The committee appointed on the peti-

tion of John Varnum of Dracutt have taken ye same under consideration and apprehend that for Ending the Difficulty mentioned in said petition and all difficulty of ye Sort In any other towns within ye Province Bordering on the Province of New Hampshire, a committee be appointed by the Genl Court to Goe into the said several towns and Enquire what number of Polls and ratable Estates is taken off from this Province by the Lines Lately run Betwixt said Provinces and make Report thereof to this Court as soon as may be, and that in the meantime the Constables of Dracutt and Nottingham be released from Charlestown gaol."

What offence had been committed by these constables does not appear. Referring to this matter, a writer says of this transaction: "No record thereof appears in the Town of Dracut. It is probable that the town still insisted on its rights and instructed its constables to regard that part of the town thrown into New Hampshire by the new line as still a part of the original town and under its jurisdiction, although why said constables should have been arrested by the Massachusetts authorities does not appear."

It appears that one of the peculiar results of this division of the town was to cause the Ministers' Commons, or land which belonged to the parish, as a perquisite of the minister for the pasture of his cattle or supply of his fuel, to be situated in New Hampshire. The town was afterward allowed, by the act of the legislature, to dispose of this tract with the proviso that the proceeds should be applied to the support of the ministry of the town. Thus, so far as the town was concerned, the business of annexation was concluded. To the people it was evident that a petition from an obscure town like Dracut would have but little little influence with King George II to change any decree which had been made. In 1803, a petition was prepared and signed by Peter Coburn and 113 others showing that "since the incorporation (of the town) a large proportion of the land has been loped off by the brittish government" the town had been deprived of its rights by such "loping" and they prayed that a portion of the town of Chelmsford might be annexed. The new town would include all of the territory lying at that time west of a line drawn from the mouth of Beaver brook, passing near Oliver

J. Coburn's house, to the State line. Also all that part of Chelmsford lying within a line drawn from Middlesex village to the City Farm and east to Concord River.

At that time what is now the thickly settled part of Lowell was farm land. A small mill on Hale's brook being probably the only manufacturing establishment included in the limits mentioned. Thus a more satisfactory shaped town would exist but would be subject to being divided by the river.

In 1825 commissioners were appointed by both states to make a re-survey for the purpose of ascertaining the exact location of the old line surveyed in 1741. The surveyors for Massachusetts were Caleb Butler and Benjamin F. Varnum. In the report of the Massachusetts commissioners, reference is made to the Boundary Pine station as being "two miles and three hundred and thirteen rods due north of a point in Pawtucket Falls called the great pot hole place." In 1827, the General Court authorized Benjamin F. Varnum of Dracut to erect stone posts at the angles on the east part of the line from the sea to the Boundary Pine which was then standing, also at the intersection of the line with any highways. Copy of commission authorizing erection of monuments:

"Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Resolved, That the Honorable Benjamin F. Varnum of Dracut in the County of Middlesex be, and hereby is, authorised and directed, to cause good Stone Monuments, not less than one foot in diameter, nor less than four feet high from the surface of the ground, to be set up and placed at each angle of the line between this Commonwealth and the State of New Hampshire, from the Atlantic Ocean to Mitchells boundary pine (so called) between the towns of Dracut and Pelham; and also on said line between the several towns in this Commonwealth from said Mitchells boundary pine to the line of the State of Vermont, so as to preserve the said line, as the same has been run and ascertained by the Commissioners appointed for that purpose, which monuments he shall cause to be permanently set in the ground, and to be lettered with the letters Ms on the Massachusetts side thereof—; and that he lay his account for his expenses and services in the premises before the General Court for allowance.

In Senate March 10th 1827
Read and passed. Sent down for concurrence.
JOHN MILLS President.

House of Representatives March 10th 1827
Read and passed in concurrence
WILLIAM C JARVIS Spkr.

March 10 1827
Approved
LEVI LINCOLN

A true copy of the original resolve
Att EDWARD D. BANGS
Secy of Commonwealth.

Caleb Butler was a great grandson of John Butler the first settler in Pelham, N. H. His wife was Clarissa, daughter of Parker Varnum. His associate was Benjamin F. Varnum the youngest child of General Joseph Bradley Varnum. His wife was Caroline Bradley. The commissioners failed to reach an agreement. New Hampshire asserted that Hazzen was in error in allowing ten degrees for the variation of the needle, thus depriving that state of a gore of land commencing at the Boundary Pine and reaching to the Connecticut river. But Hazzen states in his diary that he was so instructed by the Governor and Council of New Hampshire. Nothing further was done until 1885, when the Legislators of both states again appointed commissioners "for the purpose of ascertaining and establishing the true jurisdictional boundary line between the two states." The survey was completed about 1890 from the sea to the Boundary Pine station. At this point (the three mile line due north of Pawtucket pond), a polished granite monument has been erected and the rough stone placed there by B. F. Varnum removed. It is about four feet in height. On the east side there may be seen the figure of a pine tree cut in the stone and occupying about one half of the height of the monument which bears the following inscription:

1741
Mitchells
Boundary Pine
Latitude 42°—41′—50, 26″
Longitude 71°—19′—22, 02″

On the west side is to be seen:

The Royal Decree
Establishing
the Northern
Boundary of
Massachusetts
was dated
Aug 5 1740
George Mitchell
Located the
Eastern Section
of the line and
Richard Hazen
the Western Section
Mar. & April 1741

On the south side:

D
Mass
1890
Henry Carter
George Whitney
Edw. B. Savage
Commissioners
Nelson Spofford
Surveyor
1825-7
Samuel Dana
David Cummings
Ivers Jewett
Commissioners
Butler & Varnum
Surveyors.

On the north side:

P.
N. H.
1890
John J. Bell
Nath[1] H. Clark
C. H. Roberts
Commissioners
E. T. Quimby
Surveyor.
1825
Samuel Bell
Henry B. Chase
Samuel Dinsmore
Commissioners
Elijhalet Hunt
Surveyor.

From this monument to the sea, neat monuments were erected at the angles of the line and at road crossings and the rough stone posts removed.

The following year (1891), a survey was made of the western part of the line to the southwest corner of New Hampshire. The commissioners agreed to recommend to the Legislatures of their respective states the passing of an act accepting this line, which was the line run by Hazzen so far as could be ascertained, and establishing it as the future line of jurisdiction between the states. This action was taken and thus the controversy was brought to an end.

A portion of the report of the commissioners presented in 1899, at the close of the work, will convey the feeling of satisfaction which existed not only among the commissioners, but also among the people of the two states:

"In reporting the final termination of a long contention between the two states lasting over two hundred years, it is gratifying to record the fact that the settlement of the disputed line is mutually satisfactory and has ended with the most harmonious

feeling on both sides, in strong contrast to the bitter feelings which were engendered between the two Provinces at the beginning of the controversy."

EDWARD B. SAVAGE
GEORGE W. CATE
FRANK W. HODGDON
Commissioners for Massachusetts."

This establishment of the Province line has been recorded for the purpose of showing why the former territory of Dracut was divided and why the Boundary Pine monument was located in its present position. It appears to be an appropriate chapter to place on record in the history of Dracut.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY WARS

IN 1754 commenced the war between France and England for the supremacy of North America. Canada was then in the possession of France, and that country, aided by the Canadian Indians, sought to invade the English Colonies on the south. On the continent of Europe both nations were engaged in war, with allies on either side. Peace was finally concluded in 1763, leaving the English in possession of Canada. In fighting the Indians, while military discipline was of great value, to be successful, a soldier must adopt the methods of the enemy to some extent. In King Philip's war the colonists learned the lesson of Indian fighting which, in the later wars against the French, was of great value to them, as the Indians were allies of the French. The Indians would never engage in battle if they could avoid doing so. Their manner of fighting was by the sudden surprise, the treacherous ambush and the destruction of property. If the first rush was successful, a massacre followed; if unsuccessful, they seldom rallied to a second attack. The colonists at first were not accustomed to such methods, but soon learned that to be successful they must adopt the Indian manner of warfare. Braddock endeavored to overcome them by the rules of war which had been successful while opposed to enemies, who also had military discipline, and his troops were helpless and defeated. Washington, as his aide, knew how to oppose them and covered the retreat from the fatal field known in history as Braddock's Defeat.

When Samuel Varnum and Edward Colburn came from Ipswich, they were ignorant of the urgent need of protection against the roving bands of Indians, but after one or two attacks, they learned that garrison houses, stockades and soldiers were indispensable. These garrisons were recognized by the authorities as valuable for defence, and whenever assistance was required, on account of a threatened invasion by the savages, the garrisons would be strengthened by men and provisions.

The first Dracut settler to hold a military office was Edward Colburn, who, with Samuel Varnum, settled in this vicinity in 1669. He held the office of corporal. In the war known as the French and Indian War, Dracut men participated, although there was not a sufficient number to form a company, but one was formed from several adjacent towns. It consisted originally of sixty members, but only forty-seven were mustered in by the enrolling officer. Nineteen were enlisted men, twenty-two were hired, and six were impressed. The list included men from Dunstable, Chelmsford, Tewksbury, Dracut, Billerica, Bedford, Westford, Wilmington, Groton and Townsend in this state, and "Derryfield," "Souhegan West" Hollis, Peterboro and Londonderry in New Hampshire. One from Mutilone, which town is not identified.

This list is in existence but Dracut and Chelmsford names only will be mentioned. The list bears the following title:

"A list of Captain Jonathan Butterfields Mens Names ages Places Born Place of Rezedents Occupation Dated at Fort Edwards July ye 26 A. D. 1756.

Capt. Jonathan Butterfield 43 Chelmsford Dunstable Husbandman.

Levtt Stephen Adams 42 Chelmsford Dunstable. Husbandman.

Sergant Robert Butterfield 40 Chelmsford Westford Husbandman.

Corpril Benjamin Butterfield 20 Chelmsford Chelmsford Husbandman Inlisted.

Corpril John Warren 23 Chelmsford Chelmsford Husbandman hired.

Drumer Charles Barrons 26 Chelmsford Chelmsford Cooper hired.

Nathaniel Butterfield 45 Chelmsford Chelmsford Husbandman hired.

William Bowers 19 Chelmsford Chelmsford Labour Inlisted.

Zebulun Buttman 19 Beverly Chelmsford Cordwainer Inlisted.

Edward Colburn 30 Dracout Pelham Husbandman hired.

Ezekiel Cheevers 21 Salem Dracut Labour ImPrest.

Simeon Cory 27 Chelmsford Chelmsford Husbandman hired.

James Dutton 27 Chelmsford Chelmsford Husbandman hired.

Ambroes Emery 18 Dracut Dracut Husbandman hired.
Stephen Farnum 55 Andover Dracut Husbandman Inlisted.
Nathaniel Langley 18 Chelmsford Chelmsford Laboure Inlisted.
Isaac Proctor 18 Chelmsford Chelmsford Laboure Inlisted.

The name of the town following age of soldier gives his birthplace and the second is his place of residence. Of this number Edward Colburn, the great grandfather of the writer, was a great grandson of Edward Colburn, who came from Ipswich. Ezekiel Cheever was a member of the Cheever family, who for many generations lived on the road from Dracut Center to Methuen, represented in later years by two sisters, the last of whom, Hannah Cheever, died at the Cheever or Stickney farm in 1895. Ambrose Emery was born in 1738, in Dracut, and was the son of James and Ruth. He married July 17, 1762, Katharine Foster of Pelham, N. H. Stephen Farnum was born in Dracut, January 19, 1734, son of Stephen and Hannah and died at Lake George, September 1, 1756. The Farnum family left town probably near the close of the Revolution. Zebulun Butman enlisted from Chelmsford, but became a resident of Dracut. His children were born during the years between 1769 and 1777. He appears to have resided near Loon Hill on the Kelley farm. In 1770, he sold 100 acres to James Kelley, and in 1777, 60 acres to Asa Barker, which was afterwards owned by William Malone, who gave the name to the hill. We have reason to suppose that Capt. Butterfield's company was engaged in the expedition against Crown Point in 1758. Among some old papers in the possession of the writer, is the following receipt:

"Camp at Lake George ye 19 of october 1756 Then Received of Edward Colburne Teen Shillings In Full of all Acounts nots Bills Dues Debts Demands whatsoever from the Beginning of the world to this Present Day as Wittness my Hand

SAM^{L}. AYER."

Another proof of the presence of the company at Crown Point is found in an old letter which, for more than 160 years, has been preserved. It is brief, but, no doubt, brought comfort to the soldier in the distant camp. It is written by Hannah

(Butterfield) Coburn to her husband, Edward. It was written before envelopes were known and with the address was written on a single sheet of paper. It is addressed:

"To
Mr. Edward
Coburn in the
Army against
Crown Point under
Capt. Jonathan Butler. (Butterfield)

Pelham July the 30 1756

Loving Husband these are to Let you know that I am well and our Children are well But Benjamin has had the fever ager but he is Better and all our Relations are well Blessed be God for it. Hoping that these will find you well I have Received two Letters from you and I Should be Glad to hear from you and to know How you fair I Should be Glad you would take the first opportunity to Send me a Letter ware you are and wot you are a Doing and wether there is any Hops of your Coming Home So No more at Present but I Remain your Loving and affectionate Wife until Deth.

HANNAH COBURN."

The Benjamin to whom reference is made was then nine years of age, being born in 1747 and died about 1835. He was a soldier of the Revolution twenty years later. His granddaughter, Harriet Newall Coburn, was the wife of the late Josiah Gates of Lowell. When the British soldiers, with 1200 Provincial troops under the command of General Braddock, with George Washington as his aide marched through Pennsylvania in July, 1755, to attack the French forces at Fort Du Quesne, there was a Dracut soldier in the ranks, Ensign Thomas Hildreth.

We will include in the list of the soldiers of the Colonial war the name of Primus Lew, a colored man. He entered the service at Groton as musician, and served in the French and Indian War. His home was then at Groton, but later in life he removed to Dracut. He married November 5, 1743, a mulatto named Marguret, and among his children was one Barzilla, a fifer in

the Revolution. Barzilla's grandson, Adrastus, will be remembered as a resident of Pawtucketville. In Massachusetts archives are to be found Dracut men in Capt Aaron Willard's company:

Edward Bird (servant to John Sherburn)
Daniel Clough — John Cheever
Nehomiah Flint (minor) — Joseph Parker (son to Timothy)

In the list of members of the company of English soldiers who were engaged in the affair in Acadia in 1755, we find Simon Wood of Dracut, born August 31, 1733, son of Benjamin and Mary Wood. Also names of others who cannot be identified.

Daniel Clough — Joseph Treadwell
Joseph Emery — John Emery
Francis Knowlton — Anthony Emery
Richard Barron

The names of Barron and Emery are found in the records of Dracut in the Colonial and Revolutionary wars but have disappeared, while the names of Clough and Wood have their representatives in Dracut at the present time. Joseph Treadwell came from Ipswich, and in 1752 purchased 100 acres of land. This included the farm now owned by Hon. Arthur W. Colburn. He evidently resided here but a short time. Two expeditions were sent out during the year 1755, and in both there were soldiers from the New England towns. In 1690, Thomas Richardson, who married Hannah daughter of Edward Colburn, was a soldier in Capt. Samuel Gallup's expedition against Canada which was unsuccessful.

The Colonies acknowledged dependence on the English Government and whenever called upon, were expected to take their part in the war. The "taxation without representation" and kindred acts of oppression had not yet raised in the Colonies the spirit of rebellion. In these earlier wars they were being fitted for the long struggle which within the next few years was to commence, and the Revolutionary war was fought and won largely by men who had learned their lesson in the camp and on the battlefield during the Colonial wars.



DEACON JEREMIAH VARNUM

(See Page 422)

The central expedition was despatched to capture Crown Point and Ticonderoga, in which Capt. Butterfield's company served as already noted. The eastern expedition, in which were the eight men whose names were recorded and who were in Col. Winslow's Expedition, was designed to destroy Acadia. This was part of Nova Scotia at the eastern extremity of the Bay of Fundy.

> "In the Acadian land on the shores of the Basin
> of Minas Distant, secluded, still the little village
> of Grand Pre' Lay in a fruitful valley."
> [*Longfellow's "Evangeline."*]

Before the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1620, the French had settled on the Island of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia. In 1713, Nova Scotia was ceded to Great Britian by the treaty of Utrecht, and in 1730 the people became the acknowledged subjects of that country with the condition that they should be permitted to retain their established form of religion and be exempt from service in any war between England and France, and they were known as "French Neutrals."

The English government considered them a source of danger and took measures to deport them. This they accomplished with a cruelty and inhumanity that has remained as a reproach to Great Britian since that time.

"The French force in Nova Scotia being subdued, a difficult question occurred, respecting the disposal of the inhabitants. Fearing that they might join the French in Canada, whom they had before furnished with intelligence, quarters and provisions, it was determined to dispose them among the English Colonies. Under this order nearly two thousand miserable occupants of a sterile soil, and yet attached to it, and so loyal as to refuse to take the oath of allegiance to the King of England, were driven on board the British shipping, and disposed among the English Colonies." (Goodrich's History.) Without previous notice of an invasion the men were seized and confined in the church buildings, while the soldiers plundered the houses. Families were separated and deported to different parts of the country as far apart as possible. About one thousand were landed in Massa-

chusetts, who were for a time dependent on charity. "I know not if the annals of the human race keep the records of sorrows so wantonly inflicted, so bitter and so perennial as fell upon the French inhabitants of Acadia." (Bancroft's Hist. of U. S.)

The soldiers who enlisted in this expedition from the New England towns were not responsible for this outrage. The objects of such expeditions are kept secret and the blame must be placed on those who are their authors.

"On the 5th of September, 1755, four hundred and eighteen heads of families were summoned to meet in the Church of Grand Pre'. The same order had been given throughout the towns of Acadia. The anxious farmers had all obeyed. Colonel Winslow commanding the Massachusetts troops repaired thither with great array. 'It is a painful duty which brings me here' he said 'I have orders to inform you that your lands, your houses and your crops are confiscated to the profit of the Crown, you can carry off your money and your linen on your deportation from the province.' The order was accompanied by no explanation nor did it admit of any. All the heads of families were at once surrounded by soldiers. By tens and under safe escort they were permitted to visit once more the fields which they had cultivated, the houses in which they had seen their children grow up. On the 10th, they embarked passing on their way to the ships between two rows of women and children in tears. The young people had shown a disposition to resist, demanding leave to depart with their families. The soldiers crossed their bayonets. The vessels set sail for the English Colonies dispersing over the coast the poor creatures they had torn away from all that was theirs; many perished from want whilst seeking from town to town their families removed after them from Acadia, the charity of the American colonists relieved their first wants. Some French Protestants who had settled in Philadelphia after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, welcomed them as brothers, notwithstanding the difference of their creed; for they knew all the heart rending evils of exile." (*Guizot's History of France.*)

A place has been reserved in this history for a record of the exiles of Acadia as the men of Dracut bore a part in the deportation although no blame can be attached to their actions, as the object of the expedition would be kept a secret. It is to

the credit of the town of Dracut that a helping hand was extended to those whose lot it was to seek shelter and assistance here.

The Acadians in Dracut

Dispersed among the settlers on the coast of New England and the Colonies, on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean further south, it was only by assistance rendered by the people of the towns that these unfortunate refugees were prevented from perishing by starvation. The Landerie family was assisted by the town of Dracut, as entries in the town records show: "Oct 29 1756 Then the French Family being nine in Number Came to Dracutt and abode at the House of Mr. John Taylor and Mr. Ephraim Curties till the Tenth Day of October 1757 for Subsisting of them for that Space of time £14-1-5-3 and allowed by the General Court."

There are four more entries relating to the same subject and of a similar nature, giving account of expenses incurred and dates on which services were rendered, the last one being August 15, 1761. They showed no disposition to depend on charity, but rather were willing to support themselves, but lacking tools and materials all necessary means of support must be furnished by the town. The money expended by the town was refunded by the General Court. November 27, 1761, the Treasurer of the town, Major Samuel Varnum, was ordered to "pay Peter Landara £1-4^{s} what it cost them to the Doctor." February 14, 1758, an order was given to pay Ephraim Curtis for material for the subsisting of the French "fammilies." Ephraim Curtis lived at the old house on what was once the Joel Fox farm, now owned by Moses Daigle. The town books record several orders given the Treasurer for money for their support. A sample of these orders is given.

For paying Isaac Fox for making a loom for the French and other materials for the "Support of the said French."

To Nathaniel Fox for Provition for the French Family.

To Aaron Coburn for pork.

To Nathaniel Jones 8 shillings for 62 shad.

To Ephraim Hildreth for a foot wheel.

To William Hildreth for "grane."

To Samuel Varnum for an ax and pair of cards.

To Ephraim Curtis for house room and hauling wood.

To Josiah Richardson for one cow.

In 1761, an article was inserted in the warrant at the annual meeting: "To see if the town would give the French family the cow that was purchased for their use." It was voted not to give them the cow. An order was issued to pay Samuel Coburn for "hous room and grane." He was a son of Dr. Samuel, who lived on Varnum Avenue, and we infer that the "hous room" was in that vicinity. John Taylor, who furnished lodgings for them, lived at the Samuel Worcester place, now the home of D. Stedman Fox. Samuel Coburn also furnished "meet and pastering and wintering the French cow."

In 1761, it was voted to give Lieut. John Varnum £2-13s-4^{d} for what he gave the French family, about the time they moved to Dunstable. It would appear that by this removal the family was separated, a part remaining in Dracut, for six years later it was voted "to give the French family viz. Sarah, Marey and Betty Landre those three of the French family that Belong to the town of Dracutt twelve Dollars to transport them to Quebek the money to be put in Peter Frys hands overseer of the Poor of Salam not to be used until they actually go off and pay their passage." At the time of their departure the funds in the treasury must have been low as it is stated in the record that for that reason the town borrowed £3-13^{s}-8d of Peter Fay with which They were enabled to journey to "Quebek."

At the Curtis house where they resided for a time, certain articles have been found by later occupants which were used by these people. This briefly is the account of Dracut's participation in this event which has been the basis of the beautiful poem written by the New England poet, entitled, "Evangeline," who "sat by some nameless grave and thought in its bosom He was already at rest and she longed to slumber beside him."

CHAPTER VII

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

THE peace which followed the signing of the treaty between England and France was of brief duration. England's attitude towards the colonies was of such a nature that it caused great dissatisfaction. The Governors of the colonies appointed by the crown were little in sympathy with the American people, and often disposed to be arrogant and oppressive. The war was commenced to maintain the rights of the people of America and not with any expectation of withdrawal from the Mother Country. Those men who fell at Lexington and Bunker Hill never suspected that those conflicts would lead to the establishment of a republic. But as the war was waged from year to year, it became evident that there could be no peace unless the colonies received their freedom. The causes of the war are well known and need not be repeated here, but the part which Dracut took was creditable to the town. A study of statistics will reveal the fact that no town or city in the thirteen colonies sent to the war a greater number of men to the proportion of its inhabitants than Dracut. The total number of soldiers from this town, so far as known, was 439; the number of inhabitants including women and children was about 1100.

Many of these had served in the Colonial Wars and the peculiar nature of Indian fighting had made them self-reliant, courageous and resourceful. But the need of military organization and military training was realized, and Dracut men were taught the rules and regulations which relate to military life. They were proficient in marksmanship for their safety depended on their skill in the use of the musket to protect their families from the assaults of the Indians, and their flocks from depredation by wild animals; but, in addition, military discipline was needed.

Mr. F. W. Coburn in his "Battle of April 19, 1775," referring to this need of organization says: "If he (Lieut. Col. Smith) entertained any idea of surrendering, though I have no

evidence that he did, he must have realized the hopelessness of that, for no one seemed to be commanding the multitude before him, beside him, and behind him. They constituted a large circle of individuals, but made no attempt to stay his march or guide it in any way. They just followed along, seemingly intent only on hunting down the King's soldiers. Had some master mind been in charge of the patriot army, Smith's entire force could easily have been taken prisoners. But this was the first day of the war and was only a contest between soldiers and citizens.'' Had this occurred later, when Washington had assumed command, the result of the battle would have been more disastrous to the British.

During the period immediately preceding the Revolution, train bands were organized, which added greatly to the efficiency of the American soldiers, but as the exercises were to a great extent marching and countermarching with sham battles on the training field, the men had much to learn when real fighting commenced. The train bands were known in England a century before the Revolution, having been introduced by James I.

> ''John Gilpin was a citizen
> Of credit and renown
> A *train band* captain eke was he
> Of famous London town.''

The commencement of the war brought into service the successors of the train bands, viz., the militia and minute men. The definition of the term ''militia'' is given in the Am. Enc. Dictionary as ''The civilian military force of the nation consisting of citizens trained to arms, and subject to be called forth to enable the executive to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection and repel invasion. They are not a standing army, in the sense of being continually under arms, but are subject to the call of the President in the event of war. The organization is generally spoken of as The National Guard.''

The Minute Men were more independent bodies of soldiers, they were expected to be ready at a minute's notice, which gave them their name, and as signals were agreed upon by the discharge of muskets at night, the hanging of lanterns in belfries

"One if by land and two if by sea"

and the swift riding of horsemen to alarm the members, the name, Minute Men, was rightly applied to them. The responses were immediate, farm work was abandoned and saw and grist-mills left in charge of those who were not able to endure the hardships of war. Haste was urgent, the liberties of the people were in danger and the Minute Man must do his duty:

"They left the ploughshare in the mold
The flocks and herds without a fold
The sickle in the unshorn grain
The corn half garnered on the plain."

The battles which were fought during the first years of the Revolution were those in which only Minute Men and militia were engaged, and until its close the Federal Government exercised but little power.

"Valley Forge was the pivotal, bloodless battle of the Revolution, and it marked the disappearance of the state militia levy and the birth of the American army." (Gen. Philip Reade U. S. A.)

"These Minute Men were trained often, the towne paying the expense, when the company after its field exercises would sometimes repair to the meeting house to hear a patriotic sermon, or partake of an entertainment at the Town House where zealous 'Sons of Liberty' would exhort them to prepare to fight bravely for God and their country."

"Lord Percy said at table he never saw anything equal to the intrepedity of the Minute Men. They were of all classes and it was held as a marked distinction to be chosen as an officer in a company."

"The fife, the drum and the trumpet were the only instruments then used in the Continental army. The tunes usually played were 'Yankee Doodle' and 'The Road to Boston.' The tune of 'Chester' by William Billings was sometimes heard in camp and before the close of the war several new marches were introduced. Military bands were not formed in this country

until about the commencement of the last century. They were in some instances taught by the Hessions who settled here after the war was over."

At the period when restrictions of commerce, the stamp act, the tax on tea and other oppressive acts were being put forth by the English Government, it is with pleasure that we find a few members of Parliament who recognized the injustice of these acts and were outspoken in their condemnation. In a speech by Walpole he said: "I will leave the taxation of America to some of my successors who have more courage than I have." And Mr. Pitt also said: "I will never burn my fingers with an American stamp act." The result of all this agitation, the hardships of the seven years' war resulted in the birth of a nation which eventually was to take its place among the foremost nations of the world. Although the war was not formally commenced until after the battle at Lexington on April 19, 1775, there were indications of trouble which warranted a preparation for the event.

As early as 1770, the citizens of Boston, irritated beyond endurance by the conduct of the British troops, met a company of soldiers in the streets of Boston and, while opposing their advance, received a discharge from the muskets which killed several of the citizens. This is known as the Boston Massacre. In this affray Dracut had no part, but the news was received by the townspeople and the spirit of liberty was aroused. A warrant was issued by the town for the purpose of calling a town meeting on the 12th day of January, 1775: "Then and there to see if the inhabitants will vote to come into any method for raising any support for the poor of the Town of Charlestown and Boston now under oppressed circumstances, in struggling for the liberties of their country."

The records of the disposition of the articles in a warrant are often lacking, but we learn from a record made at a later date that assistance was rendered. "Charlestown Feb. 15 1775 Received from the town of Dracut by the hand of Parker Varnum forty five and a half bushels of rye and indian meal, also twenty eight pounds, eighteen shillings old tenor in cash for the relief of the poor sufferers by the cruel Boston Port Bill, for which we shall account to the town of Boston." This last named town was not incorporated as a city until after the Revolution.

At this same meeting Peter Coburn, Sr., was chosen to represent the town at a meeting of the Provincial Congress to be held February 1, 1775, at Cambridge. The people realized the need of a co-operation of the Colonies, and to accomplish this, a committee of the leading men who were known to be earnest in the cause of liberty were appointed. This committee was called the Committee of Correspondence and Safety. The men from Dracut chosen to serve on this committee were: Thomas Hovey, Amos Bradley, Isaac Fox, William Hildreth and Dr. Joseph Hunt. As early as 1770, two volunteer companies were raised in Dracut. One of these was composed of 70 men, who elected Joseph B. Varnum for captain.

In December, 1774, the Provincial Congress decided to enlist 12000 men to act as Minute Men. The train band was reorganized with Stephen Russell, captain; Ephraim Coburn, lieutenant; and Abraham Coburn, ensign. Joseph Bradley Varnum, before mentioned, a young man of 23 years of age, was made military instructor. He was well-fitted for the duties having made a careful study of the tactics which were in use at the time. His commission as captain was dated May 31, 1776.

In those days no house was completely equipped which did not include a musket or "Queens arm," as it was called, with powder, bullets and flints. So when the bells were rung for an alarm or a signal gun fired by a farmer, each man seized his own musket and ran to meet his comrades at the rallying place which had been appointed. Deposited in the Dracut museum is an old assessment and rate book in which is an entry relating to this time. It is entitled, "County and Baggonate rate East part 1774." The book is a curiosity as the cover is made of a piece of oak board about the thickness of cigar box board and covered with brown paper. The number to be assessed is 120 and in addition to the County rates the assessments are to pay for the "purchase of a number of Baggonates for the towns use." This is signed by Ephraim Coburn, Peter Coburn, and Ephraim Curtis, the selectmen and assessors. They were not at first provided with baggonates, or bayonets, as now called, and at Lexington and Bunker Hill they were not needed, but later the bayonet charge by the Provincials was so fierce and determined that the trained soldiers of England were forced to retire before them.

The courage of the American soldiers was underestimated, and it was said by the British officers that "any two regiments ought to be decimated if they do not beat in the field the whole force of the Massachusetts Province; for though they are numerous they are but a mob without order or discipline and very awkward at handling arms."

The Provincial Congress was not clothed with any authority. Although the Colonies sent representatives, they could only consult in relation to ways and means and to recommend measures. These measures would be received by the towns, but it was optional with them whether they accepted or rejected them. In March, 1775, the town voted: "That we comply with the resolves of the Provincial Congress so far as is in our power." Also "to have Baggonates for a Company of minit men." "To draw out one quarter part of the soldiers as Minute men, as recommended by the Provincial Congress." Voted "To give the Minute Men one shilling for exercising one half day each week for ten weeks to come after they are equipped unless the last act of Parliament—Boston Port Bill—shall be repealed." "Voted That if any of the Minute Men refuse to go when called for that they shall not receive their wages for service."

Thus the town was gradually preparing for the storm which burst upon them and which the wiser ones could foresee. The next step was the enlistment of men and the formation of companies. Officers were elected and the men instructed in the military exercises of the time.

Arrangements were made amongst the members of these companies by which the discharge of a musket in the night would summon each man at once to the training field. One of these fields was located near Hovey Square, westerly of the Henry Richardson house, and is now crossed by Henry street. In 1799, the town built a powder house near the spot and in recent years it was used by Mr. Richardson for a well house.

When, on April 18, 1775, the King's troops marched out of Boston on their expedition to destroy the stores of ammunition at Concord and Lexington, their plans had been so secretly matured that the surrounding towns were taken by surprise. The ride of Paul Revere to notify the townspeople has been recorded in history and verse.

"It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town

* * * * * * * * *

It was one by the village clock
When he rode into Lexington

* * * * * * * * *

It was two by the village clock
When he came to the bridge in Concord town."

So perfect was the organization and so well understood the system of signals that not only the towns nearby, but those more remote were hurrying forward their Minute Men by daylight. Many of them were too late to participate in the first conflict, but assisted in the demoralization which took place during the retreat of the English soldiers to Boston. "Whenever it comes to blows, he that can run the fastest will think himself the best off." This was said by one of the British officers before the battle, referring to the Provincials, and the words were literally true on this memorable 19th of April when applied to the British soldiery.

In an address delivered by Dr. M. G. Parker at Dracut Center, he said: "The British in their report of this battle complained of the Americans to the King calling them murderers because they took aim in battle; they did take aim and they hit the mark, not only at Lexington and Concord, but when they aimed at old England as well." Until a later period there was no army organization, and no authorized call for the Minute Men. Each company was independent and each man depended on his captain for orders. At the battle on April 19th, Major Buttrick assumed command, not by appointment but by virtue of his rank being higher than that of the other officers. After the affray at Lexington, the British hurried to Concord. They were met by Colonel Barrett, who, as ranking officer ordered Major John Buttrick to advance at the head of the militia and Minute Men. As the British retreated through Lexington, they encountered more of the minute men, but the Dracut companies under Captains Peter Coburn and Stephen Russell, were too late to engage in the fight and continued their march to Cambridge.

Frank W. Coburn in his "Battle of April 19, 1775," records that: "In Dracut, twenty five miles from Boston, the alarm was given soon after two-oclock by the firing of a gun by Captain Trull across the Merrimack river in Tewksbury, a signal previously agreed upon, which aroused Captain Joseph Bradley Varnum. Two companies marched immediately, one under Captain Peter Coburn and the other under Captain Stephen Russell."

In volume XIII, "Lexington Alarms," we find the "Muster Roll of the Company of Militia under command of Captain Stephen Russell of Dracut in Col. Greenes Regt, that marched on ye 19th of April A. D. 1775 against ye manisterial troops."

Stephen Russell Capt.
Eph^{m} Coburn Ist Lt.
Abra. Coburn 2d Lt.
Matthew Parker Sgt.
Benja. French Sgt.
Timo. Barker Sgt
Reuben Sawyer
David Jones
Samuel Brown
Moses Goodhue
John Austin
Jos. Hebbard
Thos. Lindsay
Jona. Crosby jr.
Obadiah Richardson
Zacha. Goodhue Jr.
W^{m} Hildreth
Robert Nicklas
Caleb Austin
Ezra Coburn
Saml. Piper
Ephraim Wright
Eliphalet Fox
Caleb Sawyer
David Austin
W^{m} Farnum
Hincher Parker
John Harvey
James Mansur
W^{m} Lyndsey
W^{m} Coburn
Francis Sawyer
Joshua Pilsbery
James Harvey
W^{m} Taylor
David Trull
Thomas Taylor
David Jones Jr.
Ephraim Hall
Ephraim Parker
Ezekiel Cheever
Timothy Frye
John Wood
Stephen Wood
John Gilchrest
Job Coburn
W^{m} Clough
Neh^{h} Flint
Hugh Jones
Jesse Adams
George Burns
Kindall Parker
James Davis
Mitchell Calley

James Sprague
Moses Davis
Green Parker
David Blood
Joseph B. Varnum
Abijah Wood
Jacob Coburn
Thomas Varnum
James Reed
Jon[a] Coburn
Jon[a] Taylor
W[m] Wood
Jonas Richardson
Barth[o] Massey
David Fox
Uriah Coburn
David Adams
John Bowers
John Taylor
W[m] Harvey
John Hancock
Dan[l] Clough
Sol[o] Jones
Moses Barker
David Clement
David Lyndsay
Tim[o] Davis
John Barron
John Thissell
John Roper
Thomas Wright
Tim[o] Brown jr
Simon Fox

"Mdx S.S Dec 18, 1775 The above & within named Capt Stephen Russell appeared & made solemn oath that this roll by him subscribed is just and true according to the best of his understanding & that the carefullest examination had been made by him in his power relating thereto.

Sworn before me

JN[O] VARNUM, Just. Peace."

The total number of names on the roll in 87 and the time of service two to seven days.

Roll of Capt. Peter Coburn's Company of Minute Men who marched to Lexington:

Capt Peter Coburn	Privates
Lieut Josiah Foster	Josiah Hildreth
" Ebenezer Varnum	Samuel Barron
Sgt. Miles Flint	John Bowers Jr
" Isaac Bradley	Edward Wyman
" Parker Varnum	W[m] Hildrick
Drummer W[m] Webster	Leonard Coburn

Hezekiah Coburn	Jona. Hamblet
Bradley Varnum	John Varnum
Peter Hazleton	Benja. Barron
Jonathan Parkhurst	Jonas Varnum
Isaac Merrill	John Bradley
Jonathan Hills	Jonas Whiting
Samuel Coburn	Josiah Fox
Henchman Richardson	Abijah Fox
Zebulon Jones	Solomon Wood
Micah Hildreth	Jona. Richardson
James Varnum	Abijah Hill
James Hunt	Benja. Crosby
Phineas Coburn	Jona. Jones

Total number on the roll 39

These names appear as spelled on the original rolls, so causing some peculiar spelling, thus William Hildreth's name is spelled Hildrick, which was a not unusual way of pronouncing the name in later years.

Dracut Men at Bunker Hill

After the affray at Lexington and Concord, the men engaged in it, being enlisted for no particular term of service, returned to their homes. But they were well aware that the British commander at Boston would soon take measures to quell the incipient rebellion, and they at once prepared to resist. In a list of Revolutionary soldiers kept in a private journal and discovered many years after the war in a secret compartment of a desk, there are names of men who served in the war. This was probably kept by Ephraim Coburn whose name appears as First Lieutenant in Captain Russell's company and now in possession of his lineal descendant, Clarence G. Coburn. The whole list is given, although some names have been recorded in the two preceding lists.

"The Lists of the men that have been in the American Servis Since the Battle at Lexington" "Those that were Engaged at Cambridge Eight Months"

Jonas Whiting
Samuel Whiting
John Fox
Moses Clement
Nehemiah Jacquest
Capt Peter Coburn
Lieut Josiah Foster
Lieut Ebenezer Varnum
Ser. Micah Hildreth
Ser. Phineas Coburn
Josiah Fox
Moses Barker
Elijah Hildreth
David Clough
Major Joseph Varnum Hir[d] £18-0-0
Ser. James Varnum
Ser. William Harvey
Corp[l] John Hancock
Corp[l] John Taylor
Corp[l] Jesse Fox
Corp[l] John Barron
Jonas Varnum
Josua Varnum
Seth Ditson
Jonathan Jones
Benjamin Barron
Jonathan Richardson
Amos Sawyer
Abijah Hills
Solomon Jones
Abijah Fox

The company encamped at Cambridge was the one that participated in the battle at Bunker Hill. The complete roll of the company is on file and is entitled, "Minute Roll of Capt. Peter Coburns Co. in Col. Bridges Regiment at Battle of Bunker Hill June 17 1775 and in the siege of the British Army in Boston in the Autumn of 1775." The additional names besides those at Cambridge were as follows:

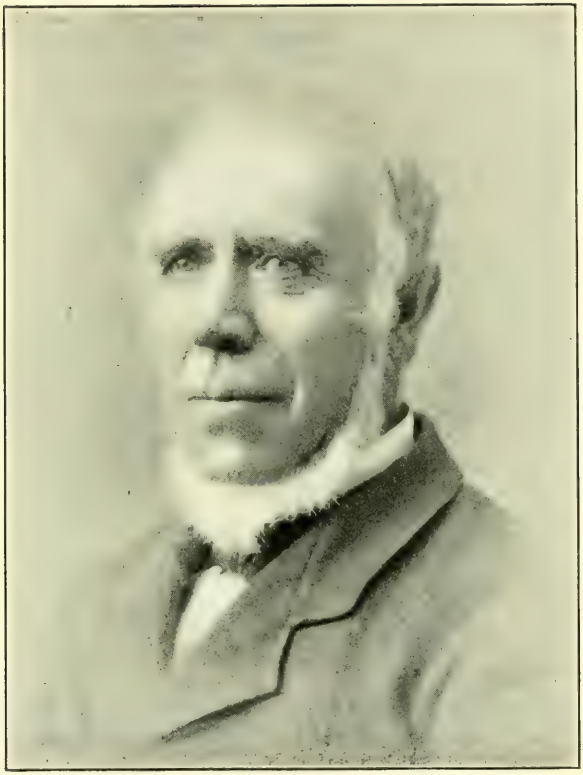
Moses Richardson
John Varnum (Methuen)
Henry Barron
John Bradley
Nathaniel Kittredge
Samuel Jenness
Solomon Wood
Timothy Patch
Gardner Gould
William Varnum
Timothy Davis
Daniel Clough (Methuen)
William Parker
Jonathan Hamblett
William Emerson
David Lindsay
Tobias Briggs
John Thissell
Peter Coburn Jr.
Thomas Right
John Roper
Thomas Gardner
Zebdiel Fitch
Joseph Tuttel
Elijah Tuttel
Benjamin Crosby
John Hoit

Total number of members in Company 58.

Peter Coburn, Jr., was the youngest member of the Company, being only ten years old. His presence was due to the fact that after his father's company had marched, he ran away from home and joined them while on the road to Cambridge. The names of the Dracut men who lost their lives at Bunker Hill are Joseph Hibbard, a member of Captain John Davis's Methuen Company; John Thissell and Benjamin Crosby of Captain Peter Coburn's Company.

Bronze tablets have been erected at Charlestown on which are placed the names of those who fell at Bunker Hill. Joseph Hibbard is erroneously credited to Captain Sawyer's Company as he, as above stated, was a member of Captain Davis's. John Thessill's name appears on the tablet as a member of Captain Coburn's, but through some oversight the name of Benjamin Crosby is omitted from them. John Thessill, as the name is spelled, was the son of Richard and Mary Thissell and uncle of Nathan, Daniel and Joshua Thissell and was born June 20, 1755. Benjamin Crosby was the son of Jonathan and Rebecca (Coburn) Crosby, born August 12, 1754, and was a brother of the great-grandfather of the late Frank L. Crosby. Joseph Hibbard was the son of Joseph, who, in 1787, owned real estate in Dracut. We are not dependent on the muster rolls for information for there was another class of documents to which reference may be made, called the Coat Rolls.

In the records of the Journal of the Provincial Congress the following appears: "Resolved that thirteen thousand coats be provided, as soon as may be, and one thereof given to each non commissioned officer and soldier in the Massachusetts forces, agreeably to the resolve of Congress on the 23d day of April last." A schedule was prepared and orders sent to the different towns to furnish them. They were allowed four shillings each for making and five shillings and four pence for cloth, seven-eighths of a yard wide, and as far as possible the soldiers from each town were provided with the coats made in that town. This was good policy, as the townspeople would have an additional incentive to perform their work well. The family of the member of a company who had lost his life could demand the coat to which they were as much entitled as they were to his pay. The orders for the return of these coats and pay are recorded.



Abel Coburn

(See Page 432)

"Methuen Feb 2, 1776. To the Committee of Supplies this may certify that Joseph Hibbard the son of Joseph of Dracutt enlisted into my Company in Col. James Fryes Regiment and served from the 19th of April till the Battle of Bunker Hill, and was then wounded of which wound he died, and was entitled to a Coat which he has not rec[d]

JOHN DAVIS Capt."

"Dracutt Nov 14 1775 We the subscribers do certify that Mr. Richard Thissell is the sole right and proprietor of his son John Thissells wages that was killed at Bunker Hill fight in June last signed by two selectmen of Dracut."

Captain Coburn's company was engaged in the battle, occupying a prominent position and it is remarkable that only these three lost their lives. The clothes worn by Capt. Coburn were pierced by bullets in many places, but he escaped injury. After several repulses and with great loss, the British at length reached the hastily prepared breastworks and an officer called out, as the Americans retreated, "Now, my boys, we have you." As he made this statement, a stone thrown by Capt. Coburn knocked him senseless. A letter written by Capt. Peter Coburn soon after the battle has been preserved and its contents will be read with interest:

"Camp Cambridge
June 17, 1775

The regiments were ordered from Cambridge to Charlestown and they arrived there about eleven o'clock at night, and then and there began a breastwork, and pursued until about sunrise the next morning. About sunrise the troops fired on us from the ships as they lay in the ferry way, and killed one Pollard that lived in Billerica, and they continued their fire at times, all the forenoon, and we finished our breastwork about twelve o'clock, at about which time they began to land nigh our breastwork and landed about 400 men, and in about two hours began to fire at us at our own breastwork, and continued to fire very brisk near about two hours. At length they stormed our breastwork and we were obliged to flee, and they pursued us as far as Bunker Hill, but we killed or wounded fourteen or fifteen hundred, and the loss sustained by us was few, about one hun-

dred and fifty killed, wounded and missing and on the 17th day of June I arrived at Cambridge about sunset, alive but much fatigued and tired. Blessed be God therefor."

When reading in this letter that "they pursued us as far as Bunker Hill," we must bear in mind that while the Americans were ordered to erect breastworks on Bunker Hill, they, by mistake, erected them on Breeds Hill. We are told that the British landed from the boats and marched up the hill in military order, thinking it an easy matter to capture the redoubt. This was the first real battle which was fought, as the others could only be called massacres, and while in reality a defeat, it is considered by the American people of as much importance as a victory, as it showed the courage of the Provincial troops and that the militia could successfully meet the trained soldiers of England. Bunker Hill monument proclaims to the world that we glory in the results of the memorable day.

On the 10th of May, a second session of the Continental Congress was held at Philadelphia. In Masachusetts, General Ward was in command, while other states had their own officers, a state of affairs not conducive to decisive results. It was during this session, but later than June 17th, that the command was given to George Washington. He arrived at Cambridge on the second of July and his first object was to relieve Boston of the presence of the British soldiers. On account of the need of siege guns and ammunition, the occupation of Bunker Hill for this purpose was a failure and the Commander-in-chief decided to occupy Dorchester Heights, from which Boston could more easily be stormed. Ordering siege guns from Fort Ticonderoga which were drawn on sledges, he took possession of the Heights and menaced Boston. The British General realizing his danger, evacuated the town and the American soldiers occupied the place. The name of one Dracut soldier who participated in this movement is William Abbott, born Sept. 8, 1757, son of Daniel and Lucy (Parker) Abbott. He married Patty daughter of Jacob and Lydia (Hall) Coburn.

Early in the year 1776, the citizens of Dracut took measures to perform their part in continuing the conflict, and to know what military stores were available and what must be procured.

At a town meeting held January 12th, a committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety was chosen, consisting of Samuel Coburn, Dr. James Abbott, Reuben Sawyer, John Bowers, William Hildreth, Parker Varnum, Eliseus Barron, Stephen Russell and Joseph B. Varnum. By the appointment of this committee the different parts of the town were represented. Samuel Coburn and Parker Varnum reported for the west part of the town, Dr. James Abbott for Collinsville, Stephen Russell and William Hildreth for the Center and Navy Yard village and Eliseus Barron and J. B. Varnum for East Dracut. The committee reported a scarcity of bayonets and flints, and advised the purchase of lead for bullets, which were made in the home. Hugh Jones, Amos Bradley and Ebenezer Coburn were chosen as purchasing agents. The battle of White Plains was fought October 28, 1776; this was on the east side of the Hudson river, near Tarrytown. The result was not decisive and as the Americans withdrew from the field, the retreat was covered by Col. Brooks' regiment, in which was Capt. Zach. Wright's company. The company was composed of men from Chelmsford, Dunstable, Westford and Dracut. The record at the State House is as follows:

"Camp at White Plains
Oct. 31, 1776

Return of Capt. Zach. Wrights Company in Col. Brooks Reigement. The names of the Dracut men are

Jonas Varnum Sergt	Caleb Astens †
Robert foard "	Saul Coburn §
John Hancock Corpl.	Jonathan Jones
Jonathem Parkhurst	William Hildreth
Henry Coburn	M. Broadstreet Coburn †
Samuel Barron	Daniel Coburn
Moses Davis §	Peter Parker §
Amos Sawyer †	Simon Flint **
Leonard Coburn §	Solomon Abot §

Sick Broadstreet Coburn Caleb Asten

† wounded § Sent with the wounded ** killed.

Lost in battle 2 guns 2 Bayonets, 2 Swoards, 10 Napsacks 14 Blankets, 7 coats 4 Jacoats 13 Britches 27 Pairs Stockings 7 Shoes 16 Shirts.

ZACHEUS WRIGHT Captain."

The Dracut Convention

The Committees of Correspondence and Safety from eleven New Hampshire and Massachusetts towns met at the house of Major Joseph Varnum Nov 5 1776, "To consider the alarming situation of Public Affairs, exorbitant prices etc." After some deliberation it was resolved to call a convention of committees and agents of towns to meet on the 26th of the same month, and to notify other towns to send representatives, if they chose to do so. The Convention met at the appointed time and 50 delegates were present from about 26 towns in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The Dracut delegates were Major William Hildreth, Samuel Colburn, Ephraim Colburn, Abraham Colburn and Parker Varnum. It was voted that "in the opinion of this convention the unhappy difficulties arising on account of the exorbitant prices that are demanded and taken for many of the necessaries of life, is a matter worthy of our consideration, and that it be a subject of inquiry at this time. Upon a fair inquiry it has been made to appear to the convention that such is the advantage taken by the merchant, farmer, trader and others of those who are obliged to purchase the necessaries of life from them, that unless some speedy and effectual remedy take place, it is the opinion of this convention that those unrighteous practices will prove the inevitable ruin of the states, there resolved that This Convention will petition the Legislative authorities of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, them requesting that they would be pleased to take the premises under consideration, and so to regulate the purchases and sales of the necessaries of life as to obviate the evils we imagine will otherwise ensue." A petition was prepared in substance as follows: The petition "Humbly showeth that notwithstanding sundry resolves and recommendation of the Hon. Continental Congress by which we apprehend they intended that no unreasonable advantage should be taken in the purchase or sale of foreign commodites, the product of our farms or our own manufactures and did agree and expressly determine that such as are venders of goods and merchandise should sell at the same rate they had been accustomed to do for 12 months then last past, many persons in the states aforesaid altogether disregarding the said proceedings

of Congress and the weal of the United States, from mercenary or worse views have augmented the price of by far the greater part of the necessaries of life to an enormous degree; many articles of which are more than double the usual prices they were respectively sold for before the commencement of the present war. That some persons have been so lost to all virtue and the love of their country as to engross the most necessary and saleable articles, purchasing them at retail price and immediately advancing upon that retail price at least cent per cent, thereby endeavoring to depreciate the value of our paper currency; that the soldiers and others not concerned in this unrighteous commerce, are groaning under their burdens. Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray this Hon. Court to take the premises under consideration, and to enact such laws and make such provisions and regulations as in their operation may speedily and effectually remedy the evils of which we so justly complain.

Signed in behalf of the Convention

[N. H. Hist. Col.] JOHN BODWELL Chairman''

''The important position held by New England was clearly perceived by the British general who made strenuous efforts to prevent this section from assisting the middle and southern states. To accomplish this he endeavored to gain possession of the line of the Hudson River. It was to prevent this that Washington fought the dreary campaign which succeeded the retreat from New York.'' [*Address of Senator Lodge.*]

To accomplish this isolation of New England, an expedition was sent from Canada under command of Gen. Burgoyne, who, with 7000 troops, a train of artillery and a large number of Indian allies, first invested the fort at Ticonderoga. The American garrison, consisting of 3000 men, abandoned the fort and joined Gen. Schuyler, and the combined forces marched to Saratoga and Stillwater. In the meantime Burgoyne proceeded to Skenesboro and from there to Fort Edward. From this place he sent an expedition to Bennington, Vt., under Col. Baum, to destroy the stores, but on August 16, 1777, he met with such a repulse from the American Army, under General Stark, that the British were greatly depressed. We are not sure that Dracut

men were at Bennington, but the great-grandfather of the writer of these records, whose farm was largely in Dracut was present and took part in the battle. He was in Capt. Jesse Wilson's company, Gen. Stark's brigade, from July 21, 1777, to the time of his discharge for disability. His discharge paper has been preserved:

"Bennington Sep. 12 1777

Edward Colburn is hereby discharged from the service he being found unfit for duty" This is signed by the commanding officers orders by John Casey A. D. C.

Whether wounded or overcome by heat and exhaustion like many others, we do not know. It is difficult on account of the absence of records to follow the movements of the Dracut men, but enough has been gathered from private records to prove conclusively that they participated in the battles which took place about Skenesboro, Saratoga, and Ticonderoga. One such proof is found in a letter written by Capt. Stephen Russell.

"Stillwater Sept 28, 1777

Loving Wife & dutiful Children, after offering my love to you,

I cheerfully embrace this opportunity to communicate with you, though at a great distance & to let you know that through the goodness of God I am well & hope these lines will find you the same. I am somewhat wearied with marching for we have had tedious marches. I have been to Skenesboro & was ordered right back again. * * * I had 40 men sent out of my company to Ticonderoga which have not returned yet & I dont know as they will. Jones has been sick with camp disease but is better & is here. We arrived here at Stillwater the 25th instant with 8 days & one nights march without stopping but one night in a place. We hear that Ticonderoga has fallen into our hands.* We have had a battle here & by the best account we lost 200 men & 1000 of the enemy [were] killed & taken. Francis Sawyer of Dracutt was killed and also W^{m} Hildreth. Our Dracut men are all well that belong to the Continental service. They are all here

*This was incorrect. The rumor was the result of a raid by the Americans which met with only partial success.

but Taylor who is at New Castle. Tories are plenty but our Indians make sad work with them. They take more or less every day. We are within 1½ miles of the enemies camp & we expect hourly to be called to action. We are daily taking on both sides. Great consternation prevails. Our men flock in here like bees that cover the face of the Earth. We have a strong army here & our men are in good spirits, and I hope with a blessing that we shall overcome the whole in a short time. We have plenty of bread and meat. What men I have with me are mostly well. Our Indians take the enemy and Tories dayly & those that wont take quarter they kill and scalp. Time only must determine the event. New England has called down heavy judgements on us at this day & in the days of calamity & distress we are to consider from whose hand it comes. God looks down with displeasure on our sins, but it is the sincere prayer of your friend and well wisher, that we may all of us mend our ways & live more to the honor and glory of our Creator than ever yet we have done & I desire that it may please an infinite being to return me again to you and that we may be a blessing to each other. Time wont permit to multiply words, so I must conclude by committing you & myself & the children & all my near and dear relations into the arms and care of a merciful being who is able to keep and support us in any state, place or condition he sees fit to put us in. So I conclude and subscribe myself your affectionate companion & loving husband until death.

STEPHEN RUSSELL Capt.

Stillwater Sept 28 1777

Give my compliments to all inquiring friends and neighbors & to Mr. Tyler & tell him his brother is with me. Sargt Barker & James Reed are well & desire to be remembered to their friends.

S. RUSSELL Capt."

A list of Capt. Russell's company is found in the Mass Revolutionary Rolls:

"A Pay Roll of Capt. Stephen Russells Company in Col. Saml. Bullards Regt of the State of the Mass. Bay Melitia, A Dom. 1777."

Capt Stephen Russell
1st Lieut Isaac Warren
2d Lieut Christopher Page
Sergt Moses Barker
" Jeratheel Coburn
" Benj. Sprake
" Peter Hunt.
Corp. Francis Davidson
" Zebediah Jones
" Zebediah Rogers
" Benja Lane
Drummer Benja. Gould
Fifer Abraham Stickney
John Adams
Chas. Annis
Wm Beard
Jesse Bradley
Reuben Baulding
Sam'l. Cummings
Jeptha Coburn
Benja Coburn
Silas Coburn
Josiah Crosby
Abiel Cross
Nathan Cory
Daniel Clement
Jonathan Coburn
Joseph Chambers
William Cauldwell
Joseph Dowse
Timothy Davis
Josiah Estabrook
Daniel Emerson
Simeon Foster
Thomas Goodwin
John Gordon
Jesse Gould
Enoch Howard
John Hayward
Nehemiah Hunt
James Haseltine
Josiah Heald
Ebenezer Johnson
Nathaniel Ingalls
Enoch Jewett
Nathaniel Jones
Daniel Kittredge
Asa Kittredge
Timothy Kelley
Phinehas Kidder
David Lane
Seth Leviston
Saul Marshall
Jesse Marshall
Joshua Marshall
Isaac Marshall
Cambridge Mooar
William Melendy
Joseph Osgood
Stephen Pearce
Silas Parker
Saml. Parkhurst
Simeon Parker
William Parham
Wm Richardson
James Reed
Peter Reed
John Reed
Porter Ray
David Richardson
John Robb
Jonas Spaulding
Joseph Spaulding
Jonathan Shed
William Taylor
Nathan Tyler
James Terbox
Saml. Trull
Hezekiah Thorndik
Samson Walker

Abijah Wood
Isaac Wright
Oliver Wright
David Walker
Saml. Whiting.

The total number of the company was 85. They drew pay from August 14th to November 30th, besides an allowance for twelve days to return home, 240 miles, marching 20 miles each day. The captain was paid £12 per month, the lieutenants £8.2s, sergeants £2.8s, corporals, drummers and fifers £2.4s and privates £2. per month as authorized by acts of the Continental Congress. The company rendezvoused August 15th at Chelmsford, and marched to Bennington, Vt., arriving there on the 17th, the day after the battle. From Bennington they went to Pawlet, Vt., and were attached to the regiment of Col. Samuel Bullard, marching to Stillwater, N. Y., where they took part in the events culminating in the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, which occurred Oct. 17th. Soon after this the company was ordered down the river to Esopus, then to Tarrytown and White Plains, where they were discharged Nov. 30th. Another company, under Capt. Joseph B. Varnum, was mustered September 20, 1777, marched from Dracut, October 1st, and remained in service till November 7th.

In Mass. Revolutionary Rolls we find "A muster Role of Capt Joseph Bradley Varnum's Company of Volenteers from Dracut in Colo. Jonathan Reed's Regt in ye state of Massachusetts Bay who Marched and Reinforced ye Northern Army according to a Resolve of ye General Court of said State Passed ye 22^{d} September 1777. For ye States pay by rates of ye Continental pay."

Capt Joseph B Varnum
Lieut Ephraim Coburn
Sergt Abijah Fox
" Jonas Varnum
" Jonathan Jones
" Timothy Barker
Corpl. John Handcock
" David Trull
Fifer Barzeala Lue
Clerk Joshua Pilsbury

Privates
Lieut David Jones
Sergt. Samuel Baron
William Abbott
Simeon Coburn
Leonard Coburn
Samuel Coburn
David Coburn
Saul Coburn
Reuben Coburn

Jonathan Crosby
Moses Davis
David Fox
Zechariah Goodhue
Josiah Hildreth
Peter Heseltine
Daniel Jaquest
David McLaughlin
John Mears
Isaac Parker
Jonathan Parkhurst
Samuel Piper
Ebenezer Sawyer
David Sawyer
Jonathan Taylor
Thomas Taylor
Bradley Varnum
Solomon Wood
John Wood

(Signed) JOSEPH B. VARNUM Capt.

Jared Sparks, the historian and lecturer, relates that before the battle of Trenton, Lord Cornwallis hastened to overtake Washington. To accomplish this it was necessary to cross a wooden bridge which spanned Stony Brook on the old kings road between the Navy Yard and Philadelphia. While the bridge was being destroyed by the Americans they suffered from the fire of the British troops as they advanced, and some of the men were obliged to work in the icy water. As the brook was swollen by a freshet, the British were compelled to find a ford at a distance from the bridge, it gave the American troops a decided advantage. The men detailed to destroy the bridge were a part of Captain Varnum's company whom Washington ordered him to take for this purpose. Touching his hat, Captain Varnum said, "Are there men enough?" Gen. Washington said, "Enough to be cut to pieces." Knowing the duty to be a dangerous one, he returned to his men and pinched his cheeks for fear that they would see that he was pale. Washington's commands were obeyed and the bridge was destroyed.

At Bennington, the troops under Col. Baum, who had been detached by Burgoyne, had been defeated, which placed him in a perilous situation. An attempt by the British to retreat brought about an engagement at Saratoga which was undecisive, but a second battle was fought which was so disastrous to Burgoyne that he attempted to retreat to Fort Edward. In the meantime this fort had been besieged and fallen into the hands of the Americans which so discouraged him that he surrendered his

army to General Gates, who had succeeded General Schuyler. Burgoyne was a very pompous man and his pomposity excited the ridicule of the American soldiers. After this defeat a couplet was composed.

"Burgoyne unconscious of impending fates
Could cut his way through woods but not through Gates."

During this year recruiting was difficult, and the towns were notified to send a certain number of men. It was customary for several men to unite in hiring one man, and these men, and not the town, paid the bounty. The length of time for which each should pay was furnished them. This statement is verified by the following copy of an old paper which is in possession of the writer relating to a transaction of this nature in Pelham, N. H. The journal of Lieut. Ephraim Coburn from which extracts will be made contains entries which this paper explains. It is brief and not dated, but is easily understood. We cannot explain why a part of them were ordered to furnish the amount for one month and others for two. It may be possible that some had already been called upon for like service and so were excused from paying as much as the others.

"Edward Coburn 2 months
Asa Carlton 2 months
Abial Barker 2 months
Nathaniel Currier 1 month
Timothy Clark Jr 2 months
William Webster 1 month
Deacon James Wilson 1 month
Daniel Wilson 1 month

You and each of you are Required forthwith to Joyne according to your Proportions to git one good man to serve in the Continental army for the Term of one year.

ASA RICHARDSON Capt."

The journal of Lieut. Ephraim Coburn, to which reference has been made, contains the names of many of those who provided substitutes, having already served themselves or being in service. It also shows the prices paid for substitutes.

"Those that went to Ticonderoga under

Capt. John Ford

10 dollars Each: John Hamblet; Simeon Williams; Henry Coburn; Ephraim Coburn
Hired John Taylor

10 Dollars Each: Thomas Goodhue; Samuel Piper
Hired Samuel Piper

Deacon Amos Bradley Paid 20 Dolars

10 Dolars Each: Ephraim Parker; Jesse Adams
Hired Moses Barker

Samuel Coburn £8-0-0 Lawful money
David Blood £4.00 Lawful money
Hired William Smiley

Capt. Stephen Russell 20 Doll.
Deacon Thos. Hovey 10 Dolars
Ephraim Coburn 10 Dolars
Hired Jonas Whiting

£4-0-0 Lawful money each: Benjamin French; Matthew Parker; Bradley Varnum
Hired Benjamin Barron

10 Dolars Each: Thomas Varnum; Joshua Jones; Jonathan Jones; Uriah Coburn
Hired Joshua Jones

40 Dolars Green Parker
Hired Seth Ditson

Lieut. Micah Hildreth

10 Dollars Each: Capt. Ezekiel Hale; Doct. James Abbot; Hugh Jones; Zechariah Goodhue
Hired Abijah Wood

Jonathan Varnum 10 Dolars
Solomon Osgood 10 Dolars
Asa Coburn 20 Dolars
Hired Asa Coburn

Jabesh Coburn 20 Dolars
Ezekiel Richardson 10 Dolars
Isaac Clement 10 Dolars
Hired Isaac Clement

Moses Goodhue 5 Dolars
Timothy Frye 10 Dolars
Robert Coburn £4-10-0 Lawful
Willard Coburn 10 Dolars
Hired Elijah Hildreth

Capt. Josiah Richardson 8 Dols.
David Richardson 10 Dolars
Capt. Stephen Russell 7 Dolars
Hired Brintwood Brown

£4-0-0 Lawful money each: Lieut. Aaron Coburn; Lieut. Abraham Coburn; Jonathan Parkhurst
Hired Solomon Wood

One third of a man hired by Capt Russells Company | Capt Varnums Company Hired Two thirds
[name not given]

The Second Voyage of Ticonderoga men for 5 months under Captain Fitch.

Samuel Coburn 20 Dolars	£44— 0—0
Ephraim Coburn 10 Dolars	£22—10—0
Lieut Aaron Coburn	15— 0—0
Job Coburn	2— 0—0
Jonathan Varnum	18— 0—0"

[Names of men hired not given]

"The names of Those that Went into the Continental Army the year 1777 with Capt. James Varnum and others for 3 years.

Isaac Clement	Josiah Wood
Oliver Hall	*Hinksman Richardson
Jesse Coburn	Asa Coburn
Seth Ditson	Joshua Jones
Daniel Abbott Jr.	John Dodge
Samuel Perkins	Joshua Atwood
Thomas Thissell	Benjamin Barron
Moses Richardson	Joseph Bussell
William Hildreth Jr.	Jonathan Hamblett
John Taylor Jr.	Elijah Hildreth."

Also in private journal kept by John Varnum "31 Mar. 1777. Town meeting to raise men for the army for 3 years. Voted to add to their bounty 100 dols. A committee was chosen and authorized to give security to each man that enlisted for 3 years 30£ lawful money over and above what ye bounty of the state is. A number enlisted. 8 may Wm Hildrith, Hincsman Richardson, Joshua [Josiah] Wood and Josiah [Joseph] Bosell went to Concord and passed muster. Richardson returned home, Hildreth and Wood went to Cambridge, Asa Coburn set out for Cambridge the same day."

Also in Lieut. Ephraim Coburn's journal: "Those that went under Capt. Reuben Butterfield to the Jersey 3 months.

Samuel Cummings	Doctor James Abbott
——— Toothacre	Samuel Mears
Josiah Crosby	Josiah Wood
Hinksman Richardson	William Abbott
Samuel Brown"	

These men were not letter writers and some could not write their names so that little can be learned from private correspondence, but there can be no doubt that the Dracut men took an active part in the stirring scenes and the battles

*Reported died July 6, 1778, his term of service from May 16, 1777 to July 6, 1778.

and marches of the campaigns that preceded the surrender at Saratoga. These men served at different times and in different places and all journeys must be taken on foot. As the postal service was in its infancy, tidings of the absent ones would be received only at long intervals.

After the victory at Saratoga which encouraged the patriots, there were several engagements during the year in which the Americans were unsuccessful, and at the close of the year they went into camp at Valley Forge. The account of the sufferings of the soldiers is familiar to us. The cold was intense, their shelter was in huts, many of them constructed of boughs, while clothing, blankets and food were difficult to procure. In all these trying experiences Dracut men bore a part.

Lossing, the historian, has left on record a fitting tribute to their patriotism: "If there is a spot on the face of our broad land where Patriotism should delight to pile up its highest and most venerated monument, it should be in the bosom of that little vale on the banks of the Schuylkill. There in the midst of frost and snows, disease and destitution, Liberty erected her altar, and in all the world's history we have no record of purer devotion, holier sincerity, or more pious self-sacrifice than were there exhibited in the Camp of Washington. The courage that nerves the arm on the battle field and dazzles with its brilliant but evanescent flashes, pales before the steadier and more intense flame of patient endurance."

Washington in a letter to Congress dated at Valley Forge, December 22, 1777, says: "Had a body of the enemy crossed the Schuylkill this morning, as I had every reason to expect, the divisions which I ordered to be in readiness to march and meet them could not have moved." Two of the divisions were those of Generals Varnum and Huntington. General Varnum upon receiving the order wrote to General Washington: "According to the saying of Solomon, hunger will break through a stone wall. It is, therefore, a very pleasing circumstance to the division under my command that there is a probability of marching. The men must be supplied or they cannot be commanded. The complaints are too urgent to be unnoticed. It is with pain that I mention this distress as I know it will make your excellency unhappy."

The citizens of Dracut sympathized with the suffering soldiers and sent a load of clothing to them, as we learn by an entry in the town records. "To the Treasurer of Dracut, Pay to Jonathan Jones £44-16s-8d for his going with a load of clothing to Valley Forge." This was a long journey for a team which was very likely an ox team, but it must have brought cheer and comfort to the men in camp. General Varnum was a brother of Capt. Joseph Bradley Varnum, who, in later years, held in the militia the rank of General. At a meeting of the voters of the town, held February 2, 1778, it was "voted to send each soldier who enlisted in the service for three years, or during the war, one pair of shoes, one pair of stockings and two shirts." Also "voted to raise 600 dollars to purchase them and transport to the said soldiers in the army." Thus assuming expense that at a later time would be borne by the government.

The British were in occupation of Newport, R. I., about three years from December, 1776, to the end of the year 1779 resisting all attempts of the Americans to dislodge them. Dracut men took part in a campaign during these years. Lieut. Ephraim Coburn's journal is further quoted.

"May ye 8 1777

Those that went under Capt Minot of Chelmsphord to Rhode Island 3 months

Moses Clement	Saul Coburn
Daniel Jacques	Jepthey Coburn."

In 1778 another expedition was planned under the command of General Sullivan. A company from Dracut served in this expedition under Capt. J. B. Varnum in Col. McClintock's regiment, General Lovell's Brigade during July and August, 1778. The roll was as follows:

Capt Joseph B. Varnum	Sergeant G Flagg Lane
First Lieut. Temple Kindal	Corporal Asa Spaulding
Second " Abraham Stickney	" Jno. Haywood
Sergeants John Robins	" Oliver Bowers
" Reuben Lewis	" Oliver Farmer.
" David Austin	

PRIVATES

John Betty
Clerk of Company
Eben Hunt
Amos Bradley
Jesse Butterfield
Jeptha Coburn
Saul Coburn
Ephraim Crosby
Benjamin Danforth
William Danforth
James Davis
Josiah Fletcher
Levi Fletcher
Edward Farmer
John Gordon
Jesse Haywood
Jonathan Hunt
James Harvey
Paul Hill
James Louis
Samuel Cory
John Perham
William Parker
Chester Parker
John Shed
Jonathan Woodward
Timothy Bancroft
Oliver Coburn
Nathaniel Ingalls
Thompson Baron [or Bacon]
Jno. Boman
Jesse Auger [or Anger]
Simeon Parker
John Webber
Ebenezer Leman
Jonathan Foster
David Merrill
William Spaulding
Jno. Dunn
Andrew Hall
John Johnson
Thomas Goodwin
Abraham Jaquith.

Some of the names on this roll were not those of Dracut men, while several can be identified as belonging to this town. Col. Louis Ansart, whose biographical sketch appears in another chapter, served for a time as an aide-de-camp to General Sullivan, and his service in this campaign comprised the only military duties in which, to any extent, he performed. A brigade was detached from the main army and despatched to Gen. Sullivan's assistance. This was under command of General James Varnum, a native of Dracut and brother of Capt. J. B. Varnum as before stated. On February 16, 1778, five men being needed to complete a guard at Boston, Jabish Coburn, Nehemiah Flint, Amos Bradley, Jr., Ephraim Wright and Benjamin Bowers were drafted. Nehemiah Flint hired William Abbott, paying him $30, to take his place.



THE OLD YELLOW MEETING HOUSE

(See Page 197)

At a meeting of the town, May 22, 1778, it was voted £1535-10s to pay the nine months', six months', and six weeks' men that went into the service. Also to give the men that went to the defence of Boston, in February, 1778, £6 for three months, also to pay the men that went on guard in April for three months £8 and to the men now on guard at Cambridge £14. In explanation of the action of the voters as recorded, Mr. A. C. Varnum has left a record which informs us that "these men were called out by the General Court for the defence of Boston, Cambridge and Watertown, where large military stores were on account of the troops that had been stationed there, having at the request of Washington joined in the expedition to capture Gen. Burgoyne at Saratoga."

In Town and County Continental rolls these additional names are found:

Benjamin Bowers	age 18	Jona. Osgood	age 17
Jeptha Coburn	" 19	Chester Parker	" 25
Daniel Clement	" 18	Dudley Davis	" 16

General Philip Reade, in "The Hildreth Family," writes: "Mass. Revolutionary Rolls show that Israel Hildreth served as a private from Oct 19 to Nov 23 1779 at Claverack N. Y. in Capt. John Porters company of the 2d Mass Bay militia Col. Samuel Denney. The company marched 200 miles to reach Claverack. Israel Hildreth advanced £341 to the town to help equip the soldiers. He cruised with Wingate or Thomas Newman until about the summer of 1779."

Under date of March 3, 1780, an order was given to the selectmen by the treasurer "Pay to Capt. Stephen Russell £824 to pay to the men that listed to go to Claverack," also same date "Pay to Captain Russell £249 that he found to be paid to the men that went to Boston, and one man going to Rhode Island."

In state archives, "Dracut July 17 1780 Received of the Committee of Dracut for hiring men a note of hand of 60 bushels of Indian Corn for our doing a 3 months turn in the army for said Town

Ebenezir Sawyer
Geo. Kelley
Reuben Sawyer
Dudley Davis
Jacob Atwood
John Curtis
Asa Hall
Jonas Prescott Barrett
Jonathan Barker
Christopher Williams
Jonathan Parker Jr.
Joshua Thissell
John Hancock
W^{m} Clough

There are recorded in the State Archives a "List of Six months Continental men 1780

Daniel Clemens [Clement]
John Mercey [Massey]
Oliver Jones
Joshua Bradley
Reuben Coburn
W^{m} Gould
David Harvey
Thaddeus Coburn
Moses Davis
Samuel Abbott
Reuben Richardson
Samuel Elliott
Timothy Kelley
Ephraim Lindsay."

Also from State archives: "We the subscribers do hereby acknowledge that we have each one of us respectively received of the Committee of Dracut to procure men for the war, in said town 100 bushels of Indian Corn for our doing a 6 mos. turn for said town to the Continental Army."

This was signed by all the men who signed the above acknowledgement except Timothy Kelley and Ephraim Lindsay. It is interesting to know the amount paid for service in the army.

"Dracut March ye 22^{d} 1781. We the subscribers Received of the town of Dracut Three Hundred Dollars in Specie, in money and in notes from the Town Treasurer in full for doing Three years Service in the army.

Reuben Colburn
William Abbott
Joel Bowers
Oliver Mears
Tony Clark [colored]
Samuel Coburn
Samuel Abbot
Thomas Whittaker
John Massey
Amos Worster [Morse]
Premus Johnson [colored]
Seth Dudson [Didson]."

On the 8th of March, 1782, another call was made, and on March 26th the Town voted "to desire Capt. Stephen Russell and Capt Joseph B. Varnum to call out their companies together to raise the men for the army, both to meet in one place." And all who belonged to the Alarm list and training bands were "requested to meet at Dea. Thomas Hoveys house to see what could be done about filling the quota."

Men from Dracut were at Yorktown and witnessed the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, which terminated the war. With peace in the land, the government, which until war was declared was a monarchy, was now a republic, a government by the people which in future years was desined to take its place among the great nations of the world, and show to other nations governed by hereditary aristocracy that the right way of government was by the people whose representatives made the laws.

The close of the war gave the people an opportunity to attend to internal improvement, and Dracut men who had served in the army now returned and devoted their energies to peaceful occupations. The sword and musket were exchanged for the plow and scythe, and the surviving veterans were permitted to spend their days in peace. In the preparation of a history it is difficult to find a detailed account of incidents in the lives of those men who were the actors in this great war of the Revolution. Writing was to them in most cases a laborious task, and they did not realize the importance of records which to them were of little account, but to the historian they are invaluable. One such record is the diary of Micah Hildreth which has been preserved nearly 150 years. The title written in a bold hand is:

MICAH HILDRETH
of
Dracutt
His Book

The first entry is "Ticonderoga August 28 1776 Then Recd of Capt Ford one Pound Six Shillings and three Pence For our Milage and Billiting From Chelmsford to Numberfore" . This refers to Charleston, N. H., which was chartered as No. Four. The next entry shows the route taken by the company which marched to Ticonderoga:

"Dracut July 23 1776

Then Marched for Cannada.

to Chelmsford
to Westford
to Groton
to Pepperal
to Townsin
to Ashby
to Ashbinham
to New Ypswich
to Rindge
to Jaffrey
to New molbury
to Swansey
to Keen
to Surry
to Westmoreland
to Walpole
to Charlestown N. H
to Springfield
to Wethirsfield
to Cavendish
to Saltish
to Ludlow
to Sasbury
to Clarodin
to Rutland
to Caselton
to Skeensbourough
to mount independent
to Ticonderoga

October ye 5 1776

Then Received of Capt Ford Nine Pound Lawful money wages which was Due to me at Ticonderoga."

The route taken for their return is also given.

"From Ticonderoga Novem. 26 1776

to Fort George
to Fort Edward
to Fort Miller
to Saratogie
to Still Water
to Half Moon
to New City
to Albany Flats
to Albany
then a Crost the
River to Green Bush
to Scoduck
to New Lebanon
to Green Groves
Caled Philips town
to Pits Field
to Patridge Field
to Washington
to Williams Burg
to Hatfield
then a Crost the
River to Hadley
to Amherst
to Shutes Barry
to New Salam
to Peters Sham
to Templeton
to Westminster
to Fitch Burg
to Luning Burg
to Sharley
to Groten
to Westford
to Chelmsford
to Dracutt."

These routes may be followed by locating the towns on a map although many of the towns have been given different names.

The diary continues: "August ye 12 then Left Isaac Clement sick with the small pox at Caselton. August ye 17 then Corpl. Spaulding was Carried to Lake George Sick with the Small Pox. August — then Asa Coburn was carried to Fort George Sick with the Small Pox. August 25 then Elijah Hildreth was Carried to Fort George sick with the small Pox. August 28 Then John Mears was Carried down the Lake to Fort George sick with the small pox. August ye 28 Then Zachariah Fletcher was Carried to Fort George sick with the small pox."

These items are sufficient to show the ravages of this disease among the Dracut Soldiers. "November ye 12 1776 Then I Went a Hunting and Sergt. Parker and Sergt Chambers and we kild Buck Weight Pr Quarter 30 lb. Dec 5 1776 Then Lieut Chaney and I Bought a Horse Prise Ten Pound Lawfull Money. First night my Horse Cost for keeping £0-1s-0d."

Then follow items from which we infer that he travelled about alone: "Ticond Novem 26 1776 Then I Sot out for Home at half after 2 at Night and Got to the Head of Lake George half after 4 then We Went on Bord and sot sail for Fort George and got there 27 about the sun an hour high at Night then I Bought 1 Qut of Cyder. 28 Day I Came to fort Edward and then to fort miles and stayed 1 Night and Got Soper and Breekfurst. 29 then to Saratoga and From there to Still Water and Eat Super and Breckfurst N. 30 I came to Half Moon and staid there that Night and Eat Super and Breckfust. then to Albaney and Drinked 2 Boles of todey and Eat Bisket & Chees. Super and Login and Breckfurs 1s-6d."

The dates which follow in the diary relate to earlier transactions.

"Ticonderoga Oct ye 28 1776 on Sunday. Then we Was a Larmed and Every man to his arms and marched to his a Larm Post for the Enemy appeared in Sight upon the Lake and a Number of Boates Began to Land a Bought 3 miles of and then 1 Boat Boar down towards us and Come within 3

Quarters of a mile of our Batries and We Fired 2 Cannon from ye Sandy Redout and 3 Cannon from ye Jarze [Jersey] Redout at the Boat and we understand that the Last Shot struck the Boat and kild 3 men. Then the Enemy Retreted Back to Putnams Point and some to Crown Point. Then the 3 Day of November the Enemy Sot Sail and Left Putnam Point and Crown Point. Nov 16 1776 at evening. Morril and Littlehal Camp got a Fier and They Blod up those magazin which kept a very hot Fier for once in Quarter of an hour one horn wood Go of and then another."

This has reference to the horns of cattle in which they carried their powder.

"August ye 19 I went on Fatague with one 100 men. August ye 23 then I went on Fatague with Capt. Miles.* August ye 24 then I went upon a Cort martial whare of Colo. Arvine was Presedent Capt. Ford and Capt Peat and Capt Eaten and Capt Liman and Lieut Baldin Lt Dench Lt Bond members of sd Court. Ticond. Aug 30 then went upon a Cort martial. August 31. then went upon a Cort martial with those Gentlemen a Bove mentioned to try such Persons as shall be brought Before Them. Sept 8 at Eving orders Came that Every officer and soldier keep Fast in thare tents and not go out till the Son Rise Next morning the Genl. expecting Some Enemy in Camps who was Dressed in Disguise to Vew our Lines But Found none Sept 26 We Hear News From New York that the kings Troops Sallied out to Force our Lines and there was Slain 2000 and 6 or 7 Hundred Taken Prisiners. Oct ye 3 Then I Went on Fatague with 100 men. Oct ye 19 Then I Went on Guard With Capt Myers and Ensign White & Sixty men. Wee Expected the Enemy the Next morning which was Sunday and our men Begun a Brisk Fier on Saturday about the Sun Half an Hour high at Night and Fired a Good many Rounds from Each Batery and with small arms from the Brest work to Clear out our Peases For the Next morning to Ingage. Sept ye 22 Lt. Whitcom Brought a Regular Ensign and a Corpril

*The work or duties of soldiers distinct from the use of arms. [*Encyclo. Dict.*]

From the Regulars Which he and Two men more Took Down towards Shambelee and Brought up to Ticonderoga to Genl. Gates. Ticonderoga Oct 3 23 1776 Then I Went on Piquet Guard with Colo. Lenord and 200 men. Oct 24 Then I went on Fatague with Colo. Whelock and Majr Stady and Major Rogers. Oct ye 26 1776 Then I Went on Main Guard with Capt. John Polhemus and sixty men and Had sixteen Prisiners under guard Confined. Ticonderoga Oct ye 10 1776 Then our Fleet and Genl. Boigoin Fleet met upon the Lake."

Reference is made in the next entry to his going on guard "which is Caled the Jarze [Jersey] Redout." The diary ends abruptly but it reveals much of the soldier's experience. A few of the entries have been omitted, but they were repetitions and nothing of interest. In 1903, the Molly Varnum Chapter, Daughters of the Revolution, presented to the town Library a handsome book prepared by Ross Turner, a celebrated Boston artist, in which the names of the Revolutionary Soldiers are inscribed. In an address given by Dr. Moses G. Parker, he states that in this list are found 33 Coburns, 15 Varnums, 14 Richardsons, 13 Parkers, 11 Jones', 9 Foxes, 7 each of Abbott, Davis, Hall and Sawyer, 6 each of Barker, Bradley, Hildreth, Lindsay and Wood, 5 each of Barron, Bowers, Clement, Clough, Crosby, Harris, Kelley and Taylor, 4 each of Flint, Foster, Goodhue, Marshall, Mears and Wright. From these 439 Dracut men 112 marched to Lexington and Concord, 23 were at Bunker Hill, 63 at Saratoga, 7 at White Plains, 69 at Rhode Island, and 74 in New York State; 61 are recorded as being in the Continental army and 23 in the Northern army without the place of service being given. Many were attached to companies and regiments, but the location of these companies and regiments are not given. In this is found:

One Colonel:
- Col. Louis Ansart

Four Captains:
- Peter Coburn
- J. B. Varnum
- James Varnum
- Stephen Russell

Twelve Lieutenants:
- Abraham Coburn
- Ephraim Coburn
- Simon Coburn
- Miles Flint
- William Harvey
- Josiah Foster

David Jones
Temple Kendall
Abram Stickney
Ebenezer Varnum
Micah Hildreth
Christopher Page.

Thirteen Sergeants:

David Austin
Moses Barker
Timothy Barker
Samuel Barron
Jerathmeel Coburn
Abijah Fox
Peter Hunt
Jonathan Jones
Gerehom Flag Lane
David Lindsay
Samuel Mansur
Mathew Parker
Jonathan Robbins

Thirteen Corporals:

John Barron
Oliver Bowers
Daniel Clough, Jr.
Francis Davidson
Oliver Farmer
John Hancock
Zebediah Jones
Ephraim Lindsay
Kendall Parker
Asa Spaulding
John Taylor
David Trull
Elijah Tuttle

Dr. Parker adds: "It is a record she may well be proud of, it places her among the first if not the first, on the list of towns, for patriots in the American Revolution, giving 36 per cent. of her entire population which was then only 1,173 to the defence of our country."

The revised Roll of Honor gives a total number of 439 names of Dracut men who served in the War for Independence. Of Corporal John Hancock it is interesting to note an entry on the Town records: "April 1772 John Hancock a Native of Great Britain came to the Town of Dracut and resided at the house of Mr. John Gilchrist." His marriage to Elizabeth Nichols is recorded in the town books, also the birth of two children. He served in several of the companies from 1775 to 1778 and his death occurred in 1796. An order is on record given to the town Treasurer for the payment of a bill as follows: "Feb 10 1779 Please pay to Elijah Hildreth Fourteen pounds for his doing a Turn upon the Guard at Cambridge the summer past." The order is directed to Major Joseph Varnum, treasurer or his successor in office. Gen. Philip Reade has explained the meaning of this order. "The phrase 'to do a Turn' was of frequent occurrence in those days. Thus if a

constable failed or refused to take the qualifying oath as such, the voters would at town meeting choose or detail another man 'To do a Turn the present year in his stead.' ''

The commissary department was conducted by the state. There was no Federal government, and to provide food for the soldiers there was no higher authority than the General Court. September 25, 1780, a resolve was passed requiring the towns to furnish beef. This was an article of food of which the men were most in need and at a town meeting held October 9th of the same year, the sum of 40,000 Continental dollars was appropriated for this purpose. In the following December, 62,000 pounds of the old emission of Continental money was raised ''for the purpose of procuring said town's proportion of beef required by the General Court.'' A committee consisting of Parker Varnum, Joseph B. Varnum and Peter Hazelton was appointed as purchasing agents. Some estimation of the value of the money at that time can be made by comparing these three sums mentioned. The first and second relate to the old emission of Continental money, while the third, which was to be hard money, was probably of as much real value as the others. The depreciation of the currency led to much suffering and disaster. In 1778, the town authorized the treasurer to sell the paper money if he could get one dollar for ten.

The following payments on record will give an idea of the value of this money. ''Paid to Elisha Baron £660 pounds for one ox, to Capt. Peter Coburn £1400 for two oxen, to Jonas Varnum £1000 for one horse and £84 for a blank book.''

In 1780 more men were needed for service in the army and a committee consisting of nine men, viz: Capt. Stephen Russell, Capt. J. B. Varnum, Lieut. Ephraim Coburn, Lieut. Miles Flint, Lieut. Davis, William Hildreth, Reuben Sawyer, Deacon Thomas Hovey and Benjamin French, was appointed ''To procure and agree with men for three years or during the war at the cost and charges of the town.''

At this stage of the war it was exceedingly difficult to persuade men to enlist. Assistance was rendered by France and for this reason it was generally considered that our independence was assured and we need not make any effort ourselves. This spirit, with the depreciation and scarcity of money, also

the lack of interest which was manifested in the earlier years of the war, was the principal cause of the difficulty to increase the forces sufficiently to engage in offensive action instead of remaining, as they were compelled to do, in simply defending themselves. All historians agree that money was difficult to obtain and the currency in danger of further depreciation, and while some were willing to accept notes from the treasurer in payment for services, others preferred to be paid in promises of cattle or corn. These were called cattle notes and corn notes.

In 1784 two men, Joel Bowers and Amos Morse, requested the town to pay them $300 in money with interest from the time of their entering the service, instead of cattle as specified in the notes they had received. But as the town preferred to pay them in cattle, they requested the town to purchase the cattle of them for fifteen dollars each; but this the town declined to do, and they were obliged to receive the cattle according to the original agreement. At a later date a small amount was paid in money instead of corn.

There were various reasons why this long war should cease. The British government was obliged to depend for supplies upon their own country, and weeks and sometimes months were consumed in transporting men and arms to America. Other wars at that time in progress demanded men which England must provide. The Americans engaged in a war to secure their independence, the enemy consisted of mercenaries who, coming from Hesse and so were called Hessians, had no incentive to win the war, and a large number of the people of England sympathized with the Colonies in their efforts to gain their liberty. All these with the success attending the American army led to the conclusion of peace and the acknowledgment of the independence of the Colonies. To show the feeling which existed in Parliament, an extract from the speech of one of the members is of interest: "We have now been thirteen years engaged in this deplorable dispute in which we have lost two whole armies. I say thirteen years for I recollect that in 1763 it was proposed to send over two regiments to General Gage, and it may be remembered that my opinion was that they be sent, but that the use of them should be left to the discretion of the General, so that he might send them back if he did not

need them. The opinion of my colleagues was that at all events they should continue in America. Numbers carried it and the regiments were sent. From that time I predicted the fatal events which actually followed from the fatal measure. In 1775 the affairs of Lexington and Bunker Hill became the signals of carnage. It is now seven years that the unhappy subjects of a divided and convulsed empire have not ceased to cut one another's throats. What have we accomplished? What have we got by all this? Nothing. What do I say, a great deal worse than nothing. More than 80,000 men have been sent over to America, not one returned, and this at a cost of one million pounds sterling, foolishly wasted in executing ill-digested plans, without connection or object. We scarcely possess a hope that our national debt will stop short of inevitable bankruptcy." After referring to the millions spent he says, "This year (1780) was marked by the loss of the only national ally which you had, by the loss of Tobago and lately by that of a brave army, a brave general, who, like us at Saratoga, was sacrificed to the want of abilities, the wild, unconcerted schemes of administration."

ROLL OF HONOR

Dracut's Sons in the American Revolution.

Number of names, 437. Population in 1776, 1173.

Daniel Abbott, Jr.
Jacob Abbott
James Abbott, Surgeon's Mate.
Samuel Abbott
Solomon Abbott
Uriah Abbott
William Abbott
David Adams
Jesse Adams
John Adams
William Anderson, Fifer
Jesse Anger
Charles Annis
Lewis Ansart, Col. of Artillery
Jacob Atwood
Joshua Atwood
Caleb Austin
David Austin, Sergt.
John Austin
Peter Austin
Thompson Bacon or Baron
Richard Baker
Reuben Baldwin
Benjamin Ball
Timothy Bancroft
Asa Barker
Jonathan Barker

Moses Barker, Sergt.
Moses Barker, Jr.
Thomas Barker
Timothy Barker, Sergt.
Jonas Prescott Barrett
Benjamin Barron
Eliseus Barron
Henry Barron
John Barron, Corp.
Jotham Barron
Samuel Barron, Sergt.
William Beard
John Betteys
David Blood
John Boman
Zebulon Bootman
Joseph Bossell or Buzzell
Benjamin Bowers
Joel Bowers
John Bowers
John Bowers, Jr.
Oliver Bowers, Corp.
Amos Bradley
Amos Bradley, Jr.
Isaac Bradley
Jesse Bradley
John Bradley
Joshua Bradley
Josiah Bradley
Tobias Briggs
Alexander Brown
Brintwood Brown
Samuel Brown
Timothy Brown, Jr.
William Brown
George Burns
Jesse Butterfield

William Caldwell
Mitchell Calley
Joseph Carkin
Nathaniel Chace
Silas Chamberlain
Joseph Chambers
Ezekiel Cheever
Tony Clark
Daniel Clement
David Clement
Isaac Clement
Moses Clement
Moses Clement, Jr.
William Cloyd
Benjamin Clough
Daniel Clough
Daniel Clough, Jr.
David Clough
William Clough
Abraham Coburn, Lieut.
Asa Coburn
Benjamin Coburn
Broadstreet Coburn
Daniel Coburn
David Coburn
Ephraim Coburn, Lieut.
Ezra Coburn
Henry Coburn
Hezekiah Coburn
Jabish Coburn
Jacob Coburn
Jeptha Coburn
Jerathmeel Coburn, Sergt.
Jesse Coburn
Job Coburn
Jonathan Coburn
Joseph Coburn
Leonard Coburn
Oliver Coburn
Peter Coburn, Capt.
Peter Coburn, Jr., Drummer
Phineas Coburn

Reuben Coburn
Samuel Coburn
Silas Coburn
Simeon Coburn
Saul Coburn
Simon Coburn, Lieut.
Smith Coburn
Thaddeus Coburn
Thomas Coburn
Thomas Coburn, Jr.
Uriah Coburn
William Coburn
Mitchell Corliss
Nathan Cory
Samuel Cory
Benjamin Crosby
Ephraim Crosby
Jonathan Crosby
Jonathan Crosby, Jr.
Josiah Crosby
Abiel Cross
Samuel Cummings
Samuel Currier
Ephraim Curtis
John Curtis

Benjamin Danforth
William Danforth
Francis Davidson, Corp.
Dudley Davis
James Davis
Mitchell Davis
Moses Davis
Moses Davis, Jr.
Samuel Davis
Timothy Davis
Benjamin Didson
Seth Didson
John Dodge
Joseph Dowse
John Dunn
Jonathan Dunn
David Durant

Samuel Elliott
William Elliott
William Elliott, Jr.
Daniel Emerson
William Emerson
Josiah Esterbrook

Edward Farmer
Oliver Farmer, Corp.
Joshua Farnham
William Farnham
Aaron Fermer
Zabdiel Fitch
Josiah Fletcher
Levi Fletcher
Zechariah Fletcher
Miles Flint, Lieut.
Nehemiah Flint
Samuel Flint
Simion Flint
Robert Foard
Jonathan Foster
Josiah Foster, Lieut.
Simeon Foster
Timothy Foster
Abijah Fox, Sergt.
David Fox
Eliphalet Fox
Isaac Fox
Jesse Fox
Joel Fox
John Fox
Josiah Fox
Simon Fox

Benjamin French
James French
John Friend
Reuben Fry
Timothy Fry
James Gardner
Thomas Gardener
Samuel Gardner
John Gilchrest
John Goodhue
Moses Goodhue
Zachariah Goodhue
Zachariah Goodhue, Jr.
Thomas Goodwin
John Gordon
Benjamin Gould, Drummer
Gardiner Gould
Jesse Gould
William Gould
Benjamin Griffin

Andrew Hall
Asa Hall
Ephraim Hall
Ephraim Hall, Jr.
Moses Hall
Oliver Hall, Fifer
Timothy Hall
Jonathan Hamblett, Drummer
John Hancock, Corp.
David Harvey
James Harvey
John Harvey
Joseph Harvey
William Harvey, Lieut.
David Harway
Enoch Haywood
Jesse Haywood
John Haywood
Josiah Heald
Joseph Hebbard
Joseph Hebbard, Jr.
James Heseltine
Peter Heseltine
Elijah Hildreth
Israel Hildreth
Josiah Hildreth
Micah Hildreth, Lieut.
William Hildreth
William Hildreth, Jr.
Abijah Hill
Paul Hill
Solomon Hill
Jonathan Hills
John Holt
Enoch Howard
Lazarus Hubbard
Ebenezer Hunt
James Hunt
Jonathan Hunt
Joseph Hunt
Nehemiah Hunt
Peter Hunt, Sergt.

Nathaniel Ingalls

Daniel Jaquist
Nehemiah Jaquist
Abraham Jaquith
Samuel Jenness
Enoch Jewett
Ebenezer Johnson
John Johnson
Primus Johnson
David Jones, Lieut.
David Jones, Jr.
Hugh Jones

Jonathan Jones, Sergt.
Joshua Jones
Nathaniel Jones
Oliver Jones
Samuel Jones
Solomon Jones
Zebediah Jones, Corp.
Zebulon Jones

Thomas Kele
George Kelley
John Kelley
Timothy Kelley
William Kelley
Phineas Kidder
Temple Kindal, Lieut.
Asa Kittredge
Daniel Kittredge
Nathaniel Kittredge

James Lafferty
Benjamin Lane
David Lane
Gershom Flag Lane
Ebenezer Leman
Seth Leviston
Barzillai Lew, Fifer
James Lewis
Reuben Lewis
David Lindsay, Sergt.
Ephraim Lindsey, Corp.
Isaac Lindsey
Thomas Lindsey
Thomas Lindsey, Jr.
William Lindsey
Abraham Littlehale
George Low

James Mansur
Samuel Mansur, Sergt.
John Marser
Isaac Marshall
Jesse Marshall
Joshua Marshall
Samuel Marshall
Bartholomew Massey
John Massey
Oliver McCann
David McLaughlin
John Mears
Oliver Mears
Samuel Mears
Samuel Mears, Jr.
William Melendy
David Merrill
Isaac Merrill
Cambridge More
Amos Morse

Robert Nicklas

John Osgood
Jonathan Osgood
Joseph Osgood

Christopher Page, Lieut.
Chester Parker
Ephraim Parker
Green Parker
Hincher Parker
Isaac Parker
Jonathan Parker, Jr.
Kendall Parker, Corp.
Matthew Parker, Sergt.
Peter Parker
Silas Parker
Simeon Parker
Simon Parker
William Parker

Jonathan Parkhurst
Samuel Parkhurst
Timothy Patch
William Patten
John Perham
William Perham
Samuel Perkins
Stephen Pierce
Joshua Pillsbury
Daniel Piper
Samuel Piper

Porter Rea
James Reed
John Reed
Peter Reed
David Richardson
Ephraim Richardson
Ephraim Richardson, Jr.
Henchman Richardson
Jonas Richardson
Jonathan Richardson
Josiah Richardson
Josiah Richardson, Jr.
Moses Richardson
Obadiah Richardson
Reuben Richardson
Stephen Richardson
Thomas Richardson
William Richardson
John Robb
John Robbins
Jonathan Robbins, Sergt.
Zebediah Rogers
John Roper
Joseph Roswell
Silas Royal
Stephen Russell, Capt.

Amos Sawyer
Benjamin Sawyer
Caleb Sawyer
David Sawyer
Ebenezer Sawyer
Francis Sawyer
Reuben Sawyer
John Shed
Jonathan Shed
William Smiley
Asa Spaulding, Corp.
Jonas Spaulding
Joseph Spaulding
William Spaulding
James Sprague
Benjamin Sprake
Barnabus Stevens
Asa Stickney
Abraham Stickney, Lieut.
James Tarbox
John Taylor, Corp.
John Taylor, Jr.
Jonathan Taylor
Thomas Taylor
William Taylor
William Tenney
John Thissell
Joshua Thissell
Thomas Thistle
Hezekiath Thorndike
——— Toothacre
David Trull, Corp.
Samuel Trull
Elijah Tuttle, Corp.
Joseph Tuttle
Nathan Tyler

Benjamin Varnum
Bradley Varnum



THE NEW OLD YELLOW MEETING HOUSE

(See Page 206)

Daniel Varnum
Ebenezer Varnum, Lieut.
James Varnum, Capt.
John Varnum
Jonas Varnum
Joseph Bradley Varnum, Capt.
Joshua Varnum
Parker Varnum
Samuel Varnum
Samuel Varnum, Jr.
Thomas Varnum
William Varnum

David Walker
Sampson Walker
Isaac Warren
John Webber
William Webster, Drummer
Thomas Whitaker
Jonas Whiting
Samuel Whiting
Benjamin Williams
Christopher Williams
Abijah Wood
John Wood
Josiah Wood
Peter Wood
Solomon Wood
Stephen Wood
William Wood
Jonathan Woodward
Ephraim Wright
Isaac Wright
Oliver Wright
Thomas Wright
Edward Wyman

CHAPTER VIII

SHAYS' REBELLION

AT the close of the Revolutionary War a heavy debt existed which it was difficult to apportion among the colonies. This apportionment must be equitable or certain ones would consider themselves aggrieved and bring accusations of partiality. No reliance could be placed on the value of paper money as State and Federal credit was of little value. To Massachusetts and Virginia larger portions of the debt were assigned than to any of the other colonies, and whether right or wrong in the apportionment, the citizens of Massachusetts felt that their share was excessive. Some recommended repudiation, others rebelled and were subdued only by the exercise of force. In the year 1786, about 2,000 men, under the leadership of Daniel Shays, misguided but terribly in earnest, sought to obstruct the execution of the laws by interfering with the sessions of the courts. At North Hampton they took possession of the Court House. The Governor promptly called out volunteer troops and his call met with a ready response. Capt. Joseph B. Varnum, "leaving the Senate Chamber of the General Court where he represented Middlesex County marched with his company to aid General Lincoln in quelling the insurrection of Shays and others, in the western part of the state. While this was a short and bloodless campaign, it was a severe one on account of its being in the winter." [*The Varnums of Dracut.*]

In this critical period Dracut again showed her loyalty to the Commonwealth and three bodies of soldiers marched from the town to the scene of conflict. "Lieut. Israel Hildreth furnished clothing provisions and cash when Generals Shepherd and Lincoln needed such for the soldiers of Dracut that marched toward Worcester for the suppression of domestic rebellion. He advanced money to Capt. Moses Nowell to repay him 'for clothing, cash and provisions the latter had let the soldiers have on Nov 12 1787 that went into the service of the government

last winter.' " [Reed's "Hildreth Family."] March 24, 1787, there was an article in the town warrant "To see if the town will make a grant of twelve shillings to each non commissioned officer and soldier who exhibited a specimen of their readiness to obey the calls of their country in lending their aid in the suppression of the lawless hand of tyranny by their laudable example in voluntarily turning out and enduring the fatigues of a winter campaign with the Honorable General Lincoln in the inclement season of the winter past." No report is given of the action taken in respect to this article. Details relating to the part taken by Dracut in this campaign are difficult to obtain, but there are enough to attest the loyalty of Dracut men and their readiness to assist in the suppression of lawlessness and violence.

There appears on the town books the record of an oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth signed by 22 of the leading men of Dracut. The same patriotic spirit animated these men as when, twelve years before, they stood on Bunker Hill and they now showed their loyalty to their principles.

"Dracut Middlesex Co. Mass April 2 1787. We, the subscribers, do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is and of right ought to be a free, sovereign and independent state; and I do swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the said Commonwealth and that I will defend the same against traitorous conspiracies and all hostile attempts whatsoever, and that I do renounce and abjure all allegiance, subjection and obedience to the King, Queen or government of Great Britain (as the case may be) and every other foreign power whatsoever; and that no foreign Prince, Prelate, State or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, superiority, prominence, authority, dispensing or other power, which is or may be vested by their constituents in the Congress of the United States. And I do further testify and declare that no man or body of men, hath or can have any right to absolve or discharge me from the obligation of this oath, declaration or affirmation, and that I do make this acknowledgement, declaration, denial, renunciation and abjuration heartyly and truly according to the common meaning and

acceptation of the foregoing words without any equivocation, mental evasion or secret reservation whatsoever.

So help me God."

Joseph B. Varnum	Peter Parker
William Hildreth	Stephen Russell
Thomas Hovey	Josiah Hildreth
Israel Hildreth	Benjamin Stevens
Parker Varnum	Thomas Coburn
James Varnum	James Harvey
Bradley Varnum	Richard Hall
Joseph Varnum	Samuel Barron.
Jonas Varnum	

Some of these renewed their oaths of allegiance in 1788 and 1790 with additional names of David Blood, Micah Hildreth, and John Gilchrest. Such a declaration made by the most prominent men of the town, many of them having been in the service during the War of the Revolution, conveys to us, their descendants, a knowledge of the high spirit of patriotism which animated them in times of peace as when in the conflict of war. A list of the soldiers from Dracut and vicinity who served in Shays' Rebellion is appended.

MASS. ARCHIVES, VOL. 192, PAGE 165.
Capt. Joseph Bradley Varnum's Company,
Col. Woods' Regiment.

J B Varnum	Captain	Jeremiah Abbot	Private
Timothy Jones	Lieutenant	Benja. Abbot	"
Peter Haseltine	"	Benaijah Burns	"
David Reed	Sergeant	Reuben Butterfield	"
Phillip Butterfield	"	David Bacon	"
Oliver Coburn	"	Moses Cheever	"
David Harvey	"	John Coburn	"
Nathaniel Fletcher	Corporal	William Cauldwell	"
Moses Coburn	"	Moses Dunsmore	"
Jona. Willson	"	Leonard Fletcher	"
Oliver Mears	"	William French	"
Nathl. Cummings	Fifer	Samll. Fletcher	"

Saml. Griffin	Private	Augustus Lund	Private
Eliphelet Ginnins	"	Leonard Parkhurst	"
Daniel Gould	"	Abraham Parker	"
Joseph Harvey	"	Henry Farwell	"
Phines Hall	"	Heman Richardson	"
Ferenton Hawk	"	Jonas Robinson	"
Jebez Hollis	"	Amos R. Sawyer	"
Hutchenson Ingols	"	Abner Stearns	"
Moses Jones	"	Edward Stearns	"
Timothy Jones Jr.	"	Ebr. Varnum	"
Amos Kenney	"	Abiel Wood	"
Henry Kneeland	"	Daniel Whitney	"
Timothy Jaquith	"	James Whitney	"
Richard Mears	"	Eliakim Wood	"
Zebadiah Mears	"	Richard Winship	"

MASS. ARCHIVES, VOL. 192, PAGE 164.

Capt. James Varnum's Company, Col. Henry Woods' Regiment.

James Varnum	Captain	John McClening	Private
——— Proctor	Lieutenant	Saml. Cummins	"
Abel Adams	"	Thomas Chambelain	"
Ephm. Jones	Sergeant	Nathl. Chamberlain	"
Benja. Butterfield	"	Dudley Davis	"
Oliver Peham	"	Joseph Emerson	"
Jeremiah Werren	"	Benja. French	"
Jesse Stevens	Corporal	John Farmer	"
Asa Coburn	"	Ezekiel Frye	"
John Massey	"	Reuben Gould	"
Silas Parker	"	Timo Howard	"
John Taylor	"	James P. Hovey	"
Saml. Abbot	Private	Oliver Jones	"
Nehemiah Abbot	"	Stephen Kemp	"
Danl. C Abbot	"	William Mears	"
Oliver Adams	"	Abel Marshel	"
Benja. Adams	"	Robert Mears	"
John Butterfield	"	Leonard Parker	"
Joseph Bradley	"	James Parkis	"
Josiah Barker	"	Amos Prescot	"
Oliver Corah	"	Tilly Parker	"

Reuben Richards	Private	Jacob Spaulding	Private
Saml. Richardson	"	Zebulon Spalding	"
Saml. Stevens	"	Isaac Taylor	"
Aaron Spaulding	"	Stephen Wilson	"
Levy Spaulding	"	Dennis Lain	"
Henry Spaulding	"	Willard Marshel	"

Mass. Archives, Vol. 191, Page 224.
Lieut. Benjamin French's Company.

Benjamin French	Lieutenant	Isaac Bradley	Private
Daniel Varnum	Ensign	John Parker	"
Saul Coburn	Sergeant	Joshua Thissell	"
Henry A. Hovey	"	Moses Hale	"
Parker Varnum	Private	Phinehas Whiting	"
William Hildreth Jun	"		

The total number of soldiers was 119. Of these, 25 names appear on the Roll of Honor as serving in the War of the Revolution and 43 are known to have been residents of Dracut. The name of Brig. Gen. Simon Coburn of Dracut is found in list of Officers in 2d Brigade. Ezra Foster, who came to Dracut in 1836, served in this war.

The War of 1812

The second war with Great Britain was not popular in New England. To some extent the people of these states considered it unnecessary, while from the nature of the cause of the war they were the ones to suffer most by the destruction of business owing to a great extent to blockades. There was not the hearty response from the town which was shown in previous and later wars, but it was represented.

In the war rolls of the Adjutant General's office the places of residence are not specified, so the names of Dracut men cannot be given.

June 22, 1812, the following action by the town is recorded, "Voted up to those soldiers that have volunteered themselves or have been detached to march in Defense of their country if called for, the sum of twelve dollars per month including what sum of money the Government gives them per month for so long a time as they shall be in actual service."

Apr 4 1814, "Voted to find Powder and Balls sufficient for every soldier within the said town liable to do military duty, and have the same deposited in the Town stock to be delivered by the select men."

August 31, 1814, it was voted "to make up to the soldiers last detached the sum of sixteen dollars a month with what is allowed by government." Also "to raise $224 for paying the soldiers who had purchased powder and camp kettles." The next year the same conditions were allowed those who went to Fort Warren. These items of record show conclusively that Dracut men served in this war.

CHAPTER IX

WAR OF THE REBELLION, INDIAN AND SPANISH WARS

THE war which commenced in April, 1861, was not unexpected by the citizens of Dracut. The war clouds were threatening many months before the storm which for four years raged in the South. Until the elections which were held in 1860 the control of the affairs of government for many years had been in the possession of the Southern states, aided by Northern sympathizers, and slavery which became more odious each year was a powerful factor in the change along political lines. It was evident that the doctrine of States rights established by Thomas Jefferson, and which had been prominent in political matters, would be replaced by that of Alexander Hamilton, who advocated Federal control. The party in control of the government in 1861 was opposed to slavery and the Southern states became alarmed and withdrew from the Union. There could be but one result, war between the North and South, and in the Spring of 1861 the war commenced which was to continue four years.

The citizens of Dracut, many of whom were descendants of those men who had fought to establish our independence, prepared to take their part in the conflict and on May 6, 1861, assembled in town meeting, "To see what action if any the town will take in relation to the alarming state of affairs which seriously imperils the perpetuity and liberty of our beloved country." Eighty-six years had passed since the Dracut military companies had responded to the call to fight for liberty and freedom from oppression. The militia law, which called upon every able bodied man to equip and perform military duty for a stated time every year, had been abolished. A list was prepared of the names of those men who were of proper age and whose physical condition would enable them to serve, but no companies were formed or taught the duties of a soldier as had been done in former years. At the meeting already mentioned, the town voted "to pay each man who has gone or who

may go $10 per month from time of enlistment to time of discharge if mustered into actual service." There was no lack of patriotism in the people of Dracut, the able bodied enlisted, money and supplies were furnished, but the lessons governing the art of war must be learned as new conditions presented themselves. Already one Dracut man, Edmund Coburn, had been severely wounded on that memorable march through Baltimore on the 19th of April, 1861, and the sum of $30 had been granted him. He was a member of the same company with Ladd and Whitney who fell by the hands of a mob that day. The Mass. Register for 1862 records that "he was a farmer's son marching in the rear rank. He was hit on the head with bricks and a minie ball passed though his body. He felt no pain at first, but the wound bled. He struggled to keep up with his company by hopping along; but finding it impossible to do this, he fell out of the ranks, and someway succeeded in getting through the crowd into a store. He felt the ball which had passed through his body, breaking some of the bones, going down his leg into his boot. When he took off his boot the ball dropped out and he picked it up, expressing a desire to keep it. Some one asked to take it for a moment and it was never returned."

The vote passed on May 6th was rescinded and a vote passed to equip a company in Dracut. This was also rescinded, as it was found that the Dracut men were enlisting in companies raised principally in Lowell, and as some preferred to perform duties in the navy, while others desired service on land, a company formed for any particular service would not receive a suitable number of men and this vote which was accompanied by an appropriation of $2,000 was also rescinded.

As the war progressed a bounty of $125 in gold was paid each man to fill the quota assigned to each town. Although for obvious reasons no companies were formed as at the time of the Revolution, the citizens were loyal and contributed freely of their substance and rendered aid to the families of those who had enlisted. The women were active in raising money by means of fairs and sent boxes to the soldiers containing comforts not to be obtained otherwise.

A comparison between the conditions which existed at the time of the Revolution and those of the Civil War is instructive.

During the first named war there was no means of transportation, the men marched to the scene of conflict as is shown by referring to Micah Hildreth's diary found on another page. Food and clothing were conveyed by ox and horse teams for their support. Couriers were the bearers of messages from headquarters to the regiments in remote places, the muzzle loading musket with its flint lock required a powder horn, bullet pouch and extra flints to be carried, the facilities for the relief of the sick and wounded were crude and the transmission of letters was unreliable. At the commencement of the Civil War the steam roads conveyed the soldiers quickly to their destination with ammunition and other supplies, the telegraph was in operation, the more modern rifle with cartridge was in use, skillful surgeons and nurses employed and hospitals provided while the work of the post office was reduced to a system.

List of Soldiers from Dracut

Atis E. Ansart
Benjamin F. Ansart

Edward Bahan
Kirk H. Bancroft
Frank M. Bassett
Gershom C. Bassett
Martin L. Bassett
George Bean
James Birmingham
John Blake
Edward Bliss
Orford R. Blood
Ira Bowers
James Boyd
George Boyle
William Braniger
Owen Brannan
Roscavius Brown
William Buck
Edward Burns
Horace A. Burroughs
Charles W. Butler
Freeman H. Butler
Brooks Butterfield
George B. Butterfield
Edward Butters
Horace Butters

Thomas Callon
John Carney
Harvey B. Chase
Appleton F. Cheever
Oliver Cheever
Thomas Church
Henry Clair
Wardwell Clough
Timothy Clark
Addison G. Coburn
Albert N. Coburn
Charles Coburn
Edmund Coburn

Edward Coburn
Frank Coburn
George A. Coburn
George H. Coburn
Howard Coburn
James M. Coburn
Orin G. Coburn
Oscar Coburn
Russell Cochran
John H. Colburn
William Cochran
Charles C. Colton
John J. Colton
Michael Costello
John Cogan
Garrett Conlon
James Cox
Charles Crandall
Dennis Crehan
John Crehan
Ira M. Cross
George Cumber

Albert O. Davidson
John M. Davis
Jonathan Davis
Martin Davis
Oliver Davis
Osgood Davis
Thomas Davis
Gardner M. Dean
Gordon M. Dean
William Dillingham
Daniel Donohoe
Patrick Donoghue
William H. Dorr
Dennis Doyle
John Duncan
Timothy Dunn

Henry M. Everest

John Q. A. Ferguson
John P. Fitzgerald
Nathaniel P. Ford
Peter W. Ford
Darius F. Fuller

Charles Gilmore
Byron H. Griswold
Charles Green
David H Goodhue
William B. Goss
Isaac B. Gould

Herbert M. Hall
Joseph Hallowell
Albert Hamblett
Arthur Hamblett
Benjamin S. Hamblett
Henry M. Hand
Calvin Harris
Samuel N. Harris
John Hirwin
John M. Hodge
John H. Housler
Edwin Hovey
James K. Howard
Asa Howe

Augustus M. Jones
James Jones
John D. Jones
Prescott L. Jones

Michael Kelley
George M. Kimball
E. F. Kittredge

James Lee
Charles Lovering
Michael Loughlin
Francis M. Lunt

Martin Lynch
Thomas Lyons

James C. Marshall
Luther M. Marshall
Simeon M. Marshall
J. P. Maxfield
James McAneny
Patrick McCarty
William McCutcheon
John McDuncan
John McNabb
Alonzo J. Melvin
Shapleigh Morgan
Benjamin C. Morrison

Charles Nelson
Franklin G. Norris
Coffran Nutting

Alexander Park
Eugene D. Park
Orrin K. Park
Alpheus Parker
Moses G. Parker
Nathan Parker
Peter Pendergast
Edward Phipps
John Pierce
Dumlar Ravonpillar
John Reall
Albert Richardson
Amos T. Richardson
Charles D. Richardson
Charles H. Richardson
Ephraim O. D. Richardson
George F. Richardson
George Richardson
Henry E. Richardson
Lorenzo Richardson
Luther L. Richardson
Monroe Richardson
Silas Richardson
Patrick Riley
William Rippman

James Schofield
John Shaughnessey
James O. Sherman
Charles Short
William E. Short
Charles E. Smith
George Smith
Newton P. Smith
Thomas Smith
William H. Smith
Daniel Smithson
William H. Snow
John Stackpole
Peter K. Staples
Charles H. Stickney
Abel Stone
Joseph A. Stuart
George W. Swain
George Short

Andrew W. Thissell
Charles A. Thissell
Joseph Thissell
William F. Todd

Philip Ulrick

Atkinson C. Varnum
John Varnum
Joseph B. Varnum
Charles P. Vincent

John Webb
James Welch
Enos H. Wheeler
John White
Thomas White

James M. Whitney
Alexander Wilson
Lafayette Wilson
William T. Wilson
Francis E. Wolstenholme
Harry A. Wood

Indian Wars

The inhabitants of North America, at the time of its discovery were called Indians, as the general opinion of that time was that the eastern coast of India had been reached. As the early settlers occupied the land, the Indians retreated toward the West and, naturally aggressive, opposed the march of civilization. At the close of the Civil War, steps were taken by the Government to keep them in subjection, by sending troops from the regular army.

Two men, graduates of West Point, served in this war. Philip Reade, born in Dracut, October 13, 1844, was a descendant of the Reades, Hildreths and Coburns, who served in the war of the Revolution. He received the appointment of Lieutenant when leaving the Military Academy and was active in the campaigns against the savages. His proficiency in other lines led the government to appoint him to the duty of establishing telegraph lines across the continent, and later, for several years, he was superintendent of rifle practice. He served in the war with Spain in 1898, being assigned to duty in the Philippines. Promoted to the ranks of Captain and Major, his last office in active service was that of Colonel, and he was retired with the rank of Brigadier General.

Charles A. Varnum was born in Dracut and received his instruction in the public and private schools of the town. He was appointed to the Military School at West Point and graduated at the time of the campaigns against the Indians. He was active in the service, being wounded in one of the battles, and after several years of service was retired with the rank of Major.

The Spanish War

In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed from Palos, Spain, on a voyage of discovery. For several years he had endeavored to persuade the governments of the Old World to assist him to discover a new Hemisphere, but they regarded his belief as visionary. Isabella, then Queen of Spain, rendered the assistance needful and by this discovery claimed jurisdiction over the

country. Gradually these possessions were relinquished until only Cuba and adjoining islands remained. These were governed in such an oppressive manner that the United States was compelled to interfere and Spain relinquished her claim to the islands. Three young men from Dracut were in the service. Arthur E. Garland, enlisted May 6, 1898, in Co. C, Sixth Regiment, and went to Cuba, but his term of service was limited on account of sickness and he was sent home. Eden C. Walker also enlisted and served in the ambulance department. George H. Connell was also in the service and was in the infantry. One other Dracut man took part in this war, although not enlisting from Dracut. This was Joseph G. Eaton, who held the rank of Admiral and commanded the "Resolute," which was engaged in carrying supplies. His body is buried in the Oakland Cemetery.

The women of Dracut have always been patriotic and helpful in time of war. During the war of the Revolution, the women managed the farms, molded bullets and spun and wove the clothing for the soldiers. In the same spirit the women of the country assisted in the Civil War preparing needful articles for the men at the front and serving as nurses in the hospitals. When war with Spain was declared, the Mass. Volunteer Aid Association was organized in Lowell and the women of Dracut formed an auxiliary association. It was thought advisable to assist by furnishing money and fairs were held for this purpose. The report of the Secretary furnishes information relating to the first public meeting. "The evening of July 21, 1898, the Center Church common was a blaze of light, our national colors were flung to the breeze, and the Star Spangled Banner was sung to a large concourse of people. Friends from the city helped to make the programme of the evening a patriotic entertainment and so successful were we that the sum of $160 was sent to the Association."

Dracut men have held high rank in military service, and while reference has been made to some of these, a list will prove interesting.

James M., the oldest son of Samuel Varnum, was commissioned a Brigadier-General of the Continental Army, under date of February 21, 1777. On May 10, 1779, he received the commission of Major-General of the State of Rhode Island.

Joseph B., a brother of James M., a Captain in the Revolution, received the appointment of Colonel of the 7th Regt. Mass. Militia, April 4, 1787. He was promoted November 22, 1802, to the rank of Brigadier-General, and June 12, 1805, received the commission of Major-General.

James Varnum, son of John Varnum, served in the Revolution, holding the rank of Captain, dated April 19, 1776, and after the Revolution was Colonel in the State Militia.

Lewis Ansart was Inspector General of foundries for the casting of cannon during the Revolution and held the office of Colonel.

John Varnum, son of Colonel Prescott Varnum, enlisted in 1861, and served through the war, and at its close he retired with the rank of Major. He was afterward appointed Major-General and Adjutant-General of the State of Florida.

In Col. James Varnum's return of the 3d Regt., 2d Brigade, Mass. Militia, the names of Josiah and William Hildreth appear in the list of Captains of companies, and Capt. William afterward became a General in the Mass. Militia.

Captain Stephen Russell and Capt. Peter Coburn commanded companies in the Revolution.

Philip Reade entered West Point when a young man and remained in the army until he was retired with the rank of Brigadier-General.

Frederick, son of Bradley Varnum, was Lieutenant in the Navy, serving in 1833 on board the Ship Columbus, and was appointed Commander, March 8, 1841. He was stationed six years in the Mediterranean.

Joseph Sladen served in the Civil War and at its close continued in the service and received the commission of Brigadier-General.

Charles A., son of Adjutant-General John Varnum, after service in the regular army and taking part in the campaigns against the Indians, was retired with the rank of Major.

The state law requiring every able bodied man to serve a certain number of days in the year in the training field was repealed about 1850 and enlistment in the ranks is now voluntary, but the companies so formed are subject to the military laws of the state.

CHAPTER X

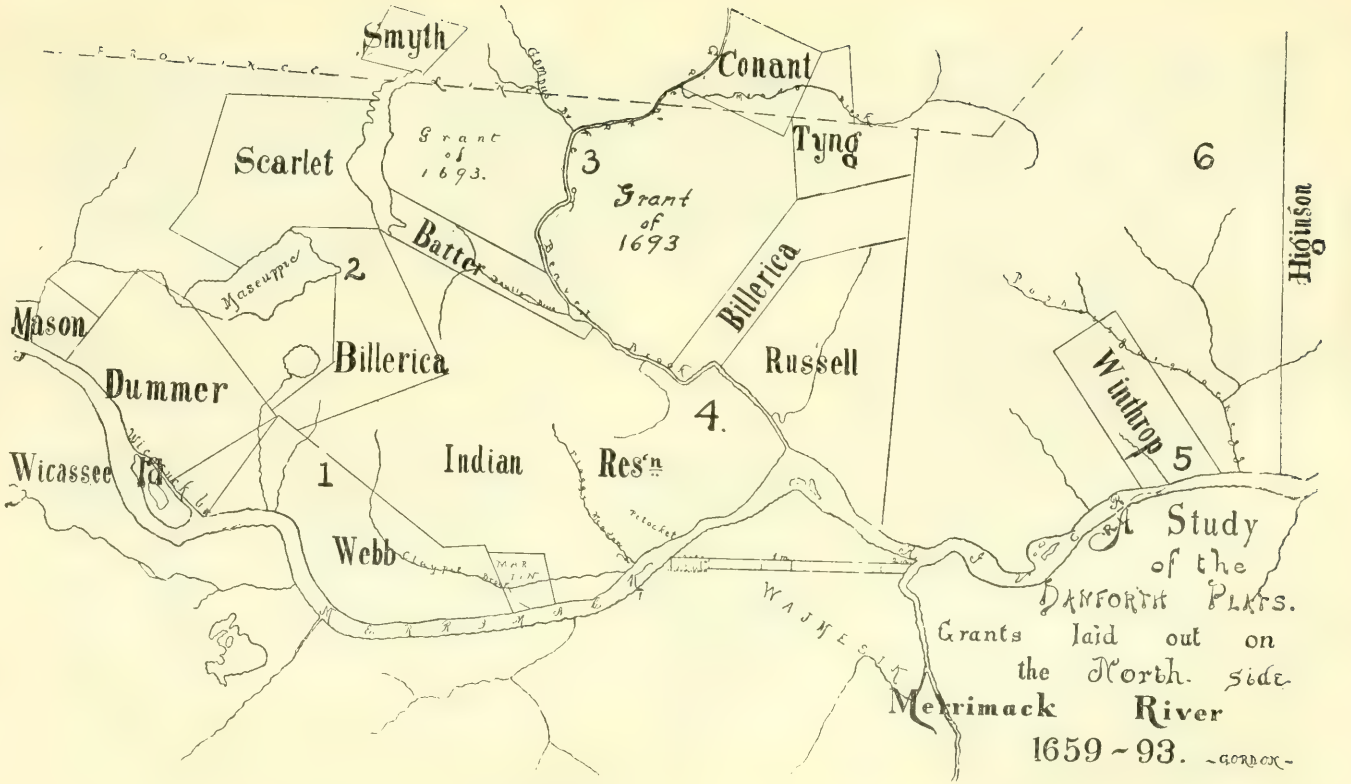
WAR WITH GERMANY AND HER ALLIES

THE years which followed the year 1913 have wrought stupendous changes, politically, in the countries of Europe and confirmed the truth of the saying that "History repeats itself." From 1871 to the year just mentioned, no wars of any magnitude were waged in Europe. The Boer War in which England was engaged was conducted in Africa, and although the nations of Europe were jealous of each other and held their armies and navies in readiness for action if needed, the country was at peace. From the time of the close of the Civil War in 1865, in America, no war has existed on the American continent (as the Spanish War of 1898 was fought in Cuba and the Philippines), until the present time.

The advancement of civilization, the enlightenment of the mind, the barbarity of war, the perfection to which death-dealing instruments of war had reached, and the long period of comparative peace had led the nations to hope that the horrors and devastation of war had ceased. Commissioners had met together to discuss disarmament and terms by which this desirable end might be accomplished.

The desire for universal dominion entertained by the Emperor of Germany had been possessed by others in former years who, having the authority to rule a small territory, desired a more extended sway. Before the Christian era, Alexander the Great aspired to the conquest of the world, but his success led to his downfall and death while in the prime of life. In later times the same spirit was manifested by Napoleon Bonaparte, who, entering military life as a Lieutenant of Artillery, became Emperor of France and endeavored to conquer the world.

The laws of nature and humanity seem to forbid such a concentration of power in the hands of one man, and Bonaparte ended his life on the Island of St Helena, in exile. The Empire of Prussia was nearly surrounded by petty principalities, each governed by princes or dukes, until Emperor William and Bis-


Smyth
Conant
Scarlet
Grant of 1693.
3
Grant of 1693
Tyng
6
Higinson
Batter
Billerica
2
Mason
Dummer
Billerica
Russell
4.
Winthrop
5
Wicassee Pd
1
Indian
Res'n
Webb
A Study of the Danforth Plats.
Grants laid out on the North. side
Merrimack River
1659 ~ 93.
-GORDON-
1—Pawtucketville
2—Collinsville
3—New Boston Village
4—Navy Yard Village
5—Kenwood
6—East Dracut

mark created the German Empire and included all under one government.

In 1914, Germany declared war against France, having as allies, Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria. The allies of France were England, Russia and Belgium and before it closed on November 11, 1918, a large part of the countries of the world were in a state of war. The United States remained neutral until 1917, when repeated insults by Germany and the success of the Central Powers, as Germany and her allies were called, obliged the United States to declare war, April 6, 1917, and the arrival in Europe of the American soldiers was the cause of the defeat of the Central Powers and the overthrow of the German Empire.

NAMES OF SOLDIERS FROM DRACUT WHO SERVED IN THIS WAR

John F. Briscoe
Antonio Bernier
Ernest Boivineval
George E. Benoit
Isadore Boucher
Louis Bernier
Israel Boulet
Adelard H. Bourgeois
Robert C. Blakely
Lawrence Brennan
Paul L. Burden
Frank S. Burden
Charles E. Bixby

Arthur H. Cashin
Ralph H. Coburn
Rodney C. Coburn
Everett O. Coburn
Napoleon Cardinal
Z. Prince Coburn
Robert Campbell
Leroy Caverly
Daniel J. Collins
Thomas Collins
Chester J. Canney
James F. Costello
Forrest H. Calhoun
Charles F. Clevette
William H. Cullinan, Jr.
Wesley Crosby
John Ciesla

George Decelle
Augustus L. Dutton
Arthur Decelle
Leander P. Davidson
Cecil P. Dodge
Elie Dufour
Joseph E. Dufour
Alfred Dufour
Anthony Drouin

Lynwood D. Foster
Carminio Fascoine
Ernest Firth
Archie Fox
Lester H. Fox

George Garner
Armand J. Guenard
Saul Joseph Gordon
Henry J. Grenier
Edward Girard
Edmund H. Gunther
John T. Gorman
John Gendreau
William Gendreau
Roderique Gendreau
Arthur C. Gunther
Raymond Gendreau

David A. Hanlon
Everett Hayward
Harvey R. Hayward
Herman L. Hodge
Royal K. Hayes
Roland Hill
Harold Hill
John Harrison
Harold F. Harrison
Samuel Newell Harris
Charles Harwood
Thomas Higgins
John J. Higgins
Frank Hobbs
Clifford R. Harvey
Paul Lockhart Hutchinson
Stewart Frank Hunt
Harold D. Hutchinson
Galen H. Harvey

Edward Irving Johnson
Charles E. Jones

James P. Kiernan
Florian J. King

Roy H. Linscott
Jacob Lachut
Joseph N. Laflamme
Walter E. Leslie
Joseph A. Lessard
Alexander Lessard
Arthur Levesque

Romeo Methot
Hugh Fred Maguire
Henry J. Murphy
Harry McLellan
Howard V. McCoy
Harold McAnney
Joseph Francis McNamara
Arthur C. Mitchell
Ernest Mooney
George Mozley

Charles Nelson
Herbert O. Nichols

John Ouimmette
George O'Malley

Theodore Perry
Hector Pilotte
Wilson H. Pollard
William Perreault
Waldo N. Pierce
Benoit Poirrer
Albert L. Pelton
Elzear Perry
Alfred Perreault

William Robertson
John J. Roughan
Thomas B. Roughan
Caleb F. Rogers
Jesse Richardson
Roscoe Richardson

Asa Richardson
Delmer E. Richardson
Arthur Gilbert Richardson
Leo Roth

David Scott
William W. Scott
Benno W. Shafter
Lionel Stewart
Manuel P. Sauris
Alexander M. Shanks
Michael F. Sullivan
Leo Sherlock
Edgar Sykes
Hollis C. Simpson
Daniel Sullivan
Raymond R. Stevens
Edwin Shore

Franklin W. Thomas
George Touissaint
Charles Therrien, Jr.

Herbert Taylor
William H. Taff
Edward H. Taff
Joseph C. Taff
Alfred J. Tremblay
Harry W. Thomas

Richard E. Udell
Percy R. Wilson
Edward Walsh
Frank R. Walters
Alexander Wilson
George Leo Wayne
Arthur L. Witherall
Benjamin Witherall
Raymond A. Willett

Edgar A. Yates
Richard Young

John Zarnowski

These men served in the different organizations which composed the American army. They were found in the infantry, artillery, and batteries, and were in the navy, the quartermaster's department and the aviation corps. Their duties, while primarily those of fighting men, included clerical work, removing the wounded in ambulances, placing in position telephone wires, police duty and serving as cooks and bakers. They were in the hardest battles and manifested the same spirit which animated our ancestors whenever called upon to defend our rights and liberties.

Among the many organizations, in which were Dracut men, mention may be made of the 319th Regt. Field Artillery, which was engaged in the section called the Argonne Meuse Forest. This battle was one in which the enemy was defeated and its influence was felt in the confidence which it gave to the allied forces and the depression which followed the defeat of the Cen-

tral Powers. At St. Mihiel the regiment was at the front and by skillful placing in position of the cannon rendered valuable assistance and contributed to the success of the engagement. The official history of the 82d divison refers in terms of praise to this 319th Regiment of Artillery. Dracut men were also members of Battery F, 102d Field Artillery, which composed a part of the 26th Division U. S. A. In a book entitled "Our Miracle Battery," written by George Mozley, a Dracut man and member of Battery F, incidents are recorded relating to the engagements at Chemin Des Dames, Seichprey-Xivray, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, Chateau Thierry, and other places. Mr. Mozley has given permission to the copying of extracts from this interesting book which will in a measure convey to the readers how the battles of the present day are fought.

"The next day, February 5th, as we rode along in the train we noticed old trenches, barbed wire, etc., and just about dark we arrived at Pommiers, where we unloaded. It was then very dark and we moved over the roads until we arrived at some old barracks, formerly German property, about seven miles from the front line. After taking care of our horses, we retired for a few hours' sleep with the exception of those who were given guard duty. The next morning we could hear the guns booming in the distance. We put branches, etc., on our guns, to camouflage them. We were ordered to keep out of sight for a number of planes were flying around and some of them might be Germans.

"On February 8th, while we were at the same place, we noticed some American Infantry-men coming up the road. They were Co. M of the 104th Infantry. As a large number of them were formerly of the 6th Regt. of Massachusetts, we found many acquaintances. On that afternoon we went to a nearby ruined village, where to test our gas masks, we put them on and went into a cave where there was gas.

"Early the next morning, February 9th, we left for the front. About noon we noticed some planes at which the French anti-aircraft guns were firing, so we knew that they were German planes. Suddenly we heard a shrill noise and then an explosion. What was it? We moved along quickly and then one of our

officers said that the noise we heard was a shell, no doubt directed at us by the German aviator.

"On Monday, February 11, 1918, the whole Battery fired its first shot at the enemy in the World War. We now had an opportunity of seeing what the enemy seemed to take pleasure in doing—destroying, for we noticed orchards everywhere where the trees had been sawed a few feet from the ground and toppled over. The churches, gravestones, etc., had been smashd to dust. * * * Enemy planes came flying around the Echelon as well as the position to get information. Guards were stationed at both places to notify in such cases and also to notify in case of gas. When the enemy was over at night, it was a wonderful sight to see the searchlights, of the French, cross each other in the sky, endeavoring to locate the plane, that shots might be directed at it. On certain nights a large number of planes would go over and we were told that this was one of the routes the enemy took to bomb Paris."

Of Seichprey we learn that "all night the shelling continued and at 3.30, on the morning of the 20th, the enemy came over the top to get Seichprey. Gas was everywhere. The guns boomed on both sides and the Battery fired for ten solid hours. All the high explosives had to be used. Each piece fired 950 rounds, when the orders came to pile up all shrapnel, there being 50 left per gun. At '409' the guns had to be pushed out so as to cover the proper places. Consequently there was no protection. All the wires were cut and the Special Detail men were trying to repair them. The last report over the wires was 'Germans enter Seichprey—still coming.' * * * When communication was finally established all batteries of the regiment received orders to fire at one particular spot. We later heard that the reason for it was that two mobile batteries had been drawn up and were doing a great deal of damage. They were annihilated by our regimental fire."

CHAPTER XI

CHURCH HISTORY

UNDER the Colonial law the inhabitants of every newly settled town were obliged to maintain a minister and have regular religious services as soon as their circumstances would permit. It was one of the conditions of the incorporation of Dracut "That the inhabitants of said land assist in the maintenance of the ministry at the town of Chelmsford as at present they do until they are provided with a minister as the law directs."

"A church officer of whatever degree was an officer only of his own church. According to the primitive doctrine and practice of New England, no man was a clergyman in any sense either before his election by a particular church or after his relinquishment of the special trust so conferred. And even while in office he was a layman to all the world except his own congregation and was not competent to exercise any clerical functions elsewhere. In the earliest times, ministers were ordained, not by other ministers, but by officers of the church which elected him or, when it had no officers, then by some of its private members. No marriage by ministers was legal, but a civil contract was made before a magistrate."

The First Congregational Church

Among the earliest records of the town we find an attempt to provide a house of worship. Under date of March 6, 1711, is recorded, "At a general town meeting unanimously agreed by a generall vote for building of a meeting house. Also by a general town meeting voted and made choice of the West end of Flag meadow hill to be the yard to set the meeting house on." For some reason unrecorded the action was not completed, for we find the following on record:

"Dracut December ye 8th day in the year 1714. At a general Town meeting of the Inhabitants that was warned by the

selectmen of the town for to meet and to see in what manner to build a meeting house for our town and to begene it this year. And it was granted by the aforesaid town meeting that the meeting house should be 30 feet longe and 25 feet wide. Also it was granted six pounds of money to be paid towards the building of said house. 30 pounds in the next year in July insueing, 30 pounds in the month of July 1716. Also it is granted for four cattle and a man a day five shillings and so according, and two shillings one man a day for getting timber, also it is granted Thomas Coburn, Ezra Colburn, Joseph Colburn, Thomas Varnum, John Varnum should be trustees for the above said town to hire and agree with men for to build said meeting house above named & give a true account to the town of their expenses to get the work done as cheap as they can. This is a true account done at a general Town meeting.

JOSEPH COLBURN
SAMUEL COLBURN
Selectmen."

The next year it was voted to build the house larger, two feet more in length, three feet in width and a shed twenty feet in length.

April 11, 1715: "Voted to purchase 1 Barrel of cider and such a quantity of rum as the trustees may see fit to be used while building the meeting house." As we read of the small amount of money which was appropriated we conclude that much of the labor would be contributed by the men who would be benefitted by a building in the vicinity. There was an abundance of lumber of little value, it was near John Varnum's saw mill at the Pawtucket falls, and but little money would be needed aside from that used to pay expert workmen to oversee the work. The next year it was again voted to set the building near Flag Meadow Hill and the boundaries of the lot defined. The location was on the south side of Varnum avenue and adjoining on the east the homestead of the late Dea. Abel Coburn. This piece of land has been known as the meeting house lot.

An account of early customs relates: "An important and interesting adjunct of the meeting house, in some parts of the country was the Sabba' Day House. Comfort being carefully

shut out of the meeting house was only then rudely provided for in such subordinate structures. The Sabba' Day House was a family affair, generally comprising but a single apartment, perhaps fifteen feet square with windows and a fireplace. It was very plainly and sparsely furnished. Chairs for the old people and benches for the children stood around the walls and a table in the center might hold the Bible and a few religious books and pamphlets, while at one side shelves contained dishes for cooking and eating. Sometimes the Sabba' Day House was mounted above a shed in which the horse could be sheltered. A group of such cabins standing about the meeting house added not a little to the picturesqueness of the spot and their use conduced greatly to the convenience and comfort of Sabbath worship especially in winter."

Many families owned foot stoves which may be seen in museums. These were small perforated tin boxes enclosed in a square frame and carried in the hand like a dinner box, which would be filled with hardwood coals either at the Sabba' Day House or at a neighbor's fireplace. Besides furnishing coals, the Sabba' Day House provided a place where the cold dinners were eaten and where the housewives could exchange ideas relating to housekeeping and the men discuss farm topics and the political situation. The oldest women in the family were entitled to the use of the footstove while the children would rap their feet together to promote circulation. If there was only one footstove in the family the dog would be brought in and the younger members would receive some degree of warmth by holding their feet on him. At the annual town meeting one of the offices to be filled was that of dog thumper whose duty it was to keep the dogs from fighting during the services. The introduction of stoves for the purpose of warming the meeting house was strongly opposed but when once admitted the Sabba' Day Houses disappeared. The pews were square with seats on the four sides. A door was attached to each one and the seats, boards without cushions, were fastened to the side with hinges and raised when the people were standing. Only the aged or feeble were allowed to remain seated during the long prayer and at its close the children would replace the board seats, which had been raised, making as much noise as possible, much

to the dismay of the elders. A flight of steps led to the pulpit. In front of the pulpit and facing the congregation could be seen the deacon's seat, while in the large galleries were seated the singers, the indigent and colored people and families who could not be seated in the audience room. Above the pulpit was the sounding board, bell shaped, and designed to deflect the sound of the minister's voice down to the congregation. Such, in brief, is the description of the meeting houses of a century ago and there was little variation from the barn-like appearance outwardly. When a minister was considered a proper man for the place he would be settled for life and pastorates extending over a period of sixty years were not unusual. Church attendance was obligatory and non-attendants were brought into court and fined.

The following is the record of the grand jury in 1730 relating to this matter:

"Middl ss At His Majestys Court of General Sessions of the Peace holden at Charlestown for and within the County of Middlx on the Second Tuesday of December being the eighth day of said month Anno Dom: Seventeen hundred and thirty In the fourth years of His Majestys Reign By His Majestys justices of said court, James Richardson of Dracut Husbandman as Principal in Five pounds and John Colburn of Dracut Husbandman Surety in the like Sum of Five pounds became indebted to the King to be levyed on their several Goods or Chattles Conditioned that he the said James Richardson & James Richardson Jun. his son Shall appear at the next court of General Sessions of the Peace for Middlx to answer to the Presentment of the Grand Jurors for not attending Publick Worship of God."

In 1711 a Mr. Hail or Hale conducted services for a time and received the sum of "43 shillings 4 pence." The same year a call was extended to Mr. Amos Cheever to become the pastor at an annual salary of fifty pounds with a promise of increased pay if the town was able to give it. He was to have eighty pounds allowed him for the purpose of erecting a dwelling house. The original letter in which this offer was made is in existence. A

similar offer was presented to Mr. Wigglesworth, who also declined to accept it. It is noticeable that no title was prefixed to these names.

October 15, 1718, the town "mad choise of Mr. Mackgger to settle in Dracut to prech the Gospel and to do the whole work of a settled minister; and likewise voted to give to Mr. MacGregor 65 pounds for his salary for the first four years."

Rev. James MacGregor, with several families of his parish in the north of Ireland, had arrived in America that year. While endeavoring to find a suitable place in which to settle, Rev. Mr. MacGregor came to Dracut and received the call to become their pastor. But his duties to his own people forbade his acceptance although he consented to perform the duties as pastor for a time and taught the town school in the winter of 1718-19. The following May he removed, with his associates, to Londonderry, N. H., where they became the first settlers of the town. In 1720, a call was extended to Rev. Thomas Parker, at that time only 19 years of age, but who so strongly impressed the people with his ability and fitness to perform the duties of the office that his youth was not considered as unfitting him to become the pastor.

His reply was as follows:

"Chelmsford, Jan. 30, 1720.

To the inhabitants of the town of Dracut:

I received your vote the 3d of this instant January by the hands of Capt. Varnum and Lieut. Hildreth, wherein I understand you have unanimously made choice of me to be your settled minister. I have perused and considered your offer also understanding your earnest desire that I should settle amongst you. I can find no fault with what you have been pleased to offer and I do therefore accept the same provided you do pay me quarterly. As you have been unanimous in your choice so I hope you will always endeavor to live in peace and unanimity, that there be found a spirit of peace in each of you. I also beg your prayers to Almighty God for me, that I may prove a faithful minister of Christ and instrumental in saving many souls, that you may sit quietly and contentedly under my ministry, that I may have a comfortable prospect of your being benefitted thereby, and that you and I may so believe and manage

ourselves that we may meet with comfort in this life and with peace at death; and that we may lift up our heads with joy at the last day shall be the continual fervent prayer of me, one of the unworthiest of God's ministers.

THOMAS PARKER.

"The action of the town is as follows:

At a general town meeting made choice of Rev. Thomas Parker as their minister and voted to give him a call to settle at eighty pounds yearly for his salary. Voted that Captain Varnum, Quartermaster Coburn and Ephraim Hildreth carry the vote to Mr. Parker and that Quartermaster Coburn be paid six pounds to provide for ye ordination."

His letter of acceptance shows the spirit in which he entered upon the work and which enabled him to render such satisfactory service that he remained with the Church until his death, which occurred March 18, 1765, his term of service being forty-four years. Before his burial the town voted "To buy Madame Parker a morning suite also to buy six Rings for the Baires for sd Desest." At the time of his death there was a small burial place between Varnum avenue and the river which is still in existence and here he was laid to rest by those whom he had served so many years. His grave was marked and after a century had elapsed his remains were removed to the Woodbine cemetery on Old Meadow road.

As the town increased in population and more families settled in the central and eastern portions the location of the meeting house became unsatisfactory, and in 1745 a town meeting was called for the purpose of selecting another site. There existed a great diversity of opinion as each section desired the location of the building in their vicinity. They finally decided "to build a meeting house for ye public worship of God, 45 feet in length and 35 feet in breadth and 23 feet between the plates and sills and that said meeting house shall be set on ye northwesterly side of ye Great road, on the easterly side of Mr. Nathan Simonds land near said road and near the easterly line of said Simonds land." Nathan Simonds was at that time the owner of one half of the 500 acres of the Indian Reservation, therefore the location must have been not far from Riverside street, then called the

Great road. The site was unsatisfactory and on December 16th of the same year it was voted "to build the meeting house 44 by 36 & 24 feet in the clear on the high land between Col. Varnums house and the Old Meadow Path." This was Joseph Varnum who lived at the garrison house near the navy yard village and the location chosen seems to have been further north than the one chosen the preceding May.

Neither site was satisfactory to all parties and no further action was taken until February 10, 1747-8, when the town again voted to build a meeting house and "to sett it at the Southwest corner of John Bowers his homestead by a Great majority in writing." The Bowers homestead was at the northeast corner of Hovey square, opposite the Hovey house. This action caused the town to be divided into factions and a controversy commenced which was so bitter that the inhabitants of the west part of the town appealed to the General Court by a petition in which they rehearsed the past actions of the town in building the first house, settling a minister, etc., and set forth the recent votes of the town in regard to the different sites selected. The situation will be better understood if the petition is recorded. Omitting the legal formalities the substance of the petition is:

"27 May 1745 the town did vote and agree upon a place for Rebuilding the said meeting house about a mile to the northward from the 1st meeting house. That notwithstanding said votes the Inhabits have called another meeting and on the 10th of Feb. last did by a majority of votes grant that a meeting house should be built at the Southwest corner of the John Bowers homestead at least a mile eastward from ye place agreed upon ye 27 of May as aforesaid and further granted two hundred pounds of the last Emission [papermoney] to be laid out in building the same which last mentioned place is upward of two miles eastward from the first meeting house" and further prayed that a committee be appointed "to view and appoint the most reasonable place for a meeting house." The petitioners state that they believe by the action of the town that two meeting houses are to be built at the towns charge without separating the inhabitants and if so they request that they may be divided into two towns or parishes.

The petitioners were

John Varnum
John Littlehale
Abraham Varnum
Edward Coburn
Josiah Coburn
Thomas Varnum
Samuel Winn
Caleb Parker
Ephraim Colburn
Edward Coburn Jr.
John Littlehale Jr.
Robert Lindsay
James Richardson
John Williams
Joseph Colburn
Ezra Littlehale
Ezekiel Richardson Jr.
Aaron Coburn
Abraham Coburn
Daniel Coburn

These signers can be identified as residents of the west part of the town. In answer to the petition the General Court ordered April 7, 1748, "that Col. Richards and Mr. Brewer with such as shall be joined by the Hon. Board be a Committee to view the Situation & Circumstances of the Town of Dracut at the charge of the petitioners & report what they judge proper for this Court to do in this Petition and all proceedings respecting building a meeting house are stayed in the meantime." A counter petition was presented April 15, 1748 by those citizens who favored the placing of the building on the Bowers' lot. It was signed by:

Jacob Coburn
Samuel Varnum
Levi Hildreth
Simeon Colburn
Kendall Parker
David Parker
William Hill
Stephen Russell
Jonathan Crosby
Robert Wright
Josiah Richardson Jr.
David Fox
James Emery
Jonathan Emery
John Crage
Francis Nickles
John Varnum Jr.
Edward Taylor
Stephen Kimball
Thomas Hildreth
Stephen Russell Jr.
Stephen Farmer
Alexander Lindsay
Jacob Colburn Jr.
Joseph Chamberlain
Joseph Chamberlain Jr.
Darius Harris
Ephraim Curtis Jr.
Ephraim Richardson
Stephen Wood
Daniel Fox

The Legislative Committee decided that the proper place for the location was "on the height of land in the highway between the barn of Col. Varnum and the orchard of said Varnum northwesterly of said barn. This decision would locate the building on the west side of Beaver brook as proposed three years previous to this time. This report was adopted by the Council as the Senate was then called, but the House did not concur and thus the matter was left as before. The town clerk's record of August 22, 1748, states the action of the town "Voted to accept the meeting house that was voted to be set up at the Southwest corner of John Bowers homestead lot to stand and be finished at the Highway Southward of Capt John Colburns house where the frame is already raised." September 6, 1748, "Voted to take part or all of the old meeting house to finish the new." Notwithstanding this vote, the old house was offered for sale at auction in 1758 and purchased by Daniel Abbott, "he being the Highest Bider in sd Vandue." The exact site of the new house was unknown for many years, but following the transfer of the Capt. John Colburn homestead we can locate it very nearly. March 1, 1750 Capt. John Colburn conveyed his "homestead farm containing 60 acres lying on both sides of the road by the meeting house" to his son, Ensign Joshua Colburn. November 4, 1757, Joshua deeded the dwelling house, barn and eight acres of land to Nathaniel Mitchell, a tanner and currier, whose vats were on Tanhouse brook. The tract is described as bounded "at the Southwest corner at a great stone in the end of a wall by the Northward side of the Townway, by the westerly side of the gate by the road about *three rods North Easterly from the North East corner of the meeting house* in said town."

The writer remembers this gate or, what is more probable, one of the later built gates which stood at the end of the lane which led from Pleasant street northward to the Swain house and which occupied the land on which the cottages on the west side of Upland street near the line of the Clark farm, are built. The southwest corner of this property on the street is the same as the southeast corner of the George M. Clark homestead. An old deed of this last named property, dated 1765, from Daniel Abbot to Rev. Nathan Davis gives the same distance from this bound to the "North East corner of the meeting house" as

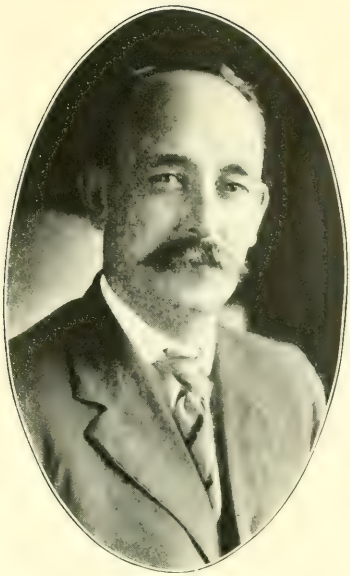
mentioned in the Mitchel deed, that is, about three rods. Measurements from this bound locate the front of the building at the line of the Justus Richardson land opposite the Clark house which stands at the corner of Clark and Pleasant streets. The north side was in the highway which is four rods wide at this place. The west end of the building must have been about thirteen rods eastward from the east line of Sladen street at its junction with Pleasant street. By placing the building in the highway the town avoided the expense of buying land and this recalls a statement found in an old diary written in 1679 and confirms the fact that the buildings were sometimes placed in the highway.

Two travellers, visiting in the vicinity of New York City, write that they came "to the first village called Breuklen, which has a small and ugly little church in the middle of the road." On the south or front side there was a door midway between the ends of the building, also one at the east and west ends. When partly finished it was used as a house of worship and for town meetings, but the galleries were unfinished until 1754 as in that year it was "Voted to Let out the finishing of the Gallery in the Meeting Hous to those that would appear to Do it cheapest and workman Like." At a town meeting in 1755 there was an article in the warrant "To see if the town will dignifie the seats in the meeting house." It was voted to seat the meeting house in said town and a committee consisting of Samuel Varnum, Josiah Richardson, Robert Hildreth, Timothy Coburn and Samuel Coburn was appointed. Another vote declared "that the first in Dignity shall be the fore seat below and the second seat below in sd meeting house shall be the second seat in dignity and the fore seat in the front gallery shall be the third seat in Dignity in sd house and the fore seat in the side gallery shall be the fourth seat in Dignity and the third seat below shall be the fifth seat in Dignity and the second in the front gallery shall be the sixth seat in Dignity and the fourth seat below shall be the seventh seat in Dignity in sd meeting hous and also the second seat in the side gallery shall be the eighth seat in Dignity in sd hous." After dignifying the house the gallery seats were sold at "Vandue" or auction on condition "that those that Purchas Rite or Rites in sd pews shall not have liberty to sell or Dispose of

the same without a lisance from sd town and they that Purchas the same shall be obliged to set in them either themselves or by ther wyves or children or som friend but not to send a servant to set there or a childe under thirteen years of age or any other to Degrade sd seet or seets or to make uneasiness to their seet mats that Purchas a part or a Right in the same seet and Pews.'' They also voted ''to purchas a cover for the Cushing for the Desk for the meeting house in sd Dracut,'' and by separate vote they decided to ''by a valvit one and to be of the same Choler as the one on the old desk.'' To keep it free from dust they voted ''to by som worshlather sheep skinn to cover sd cushing under sd sheep skinn.'' The pew owners were allowed to build their own pews but restrictions were placed on them in relation to size, height, etc.

In 1768 they voted ''not to appoint any seat in the meeting house for the negroes to sit in.'' Apparently it was not considered necessary to specify any particular seats for them as it is not reasonable to suppose that they were to be excluded. A few specimens of the minor matters acted upon by the town, where now the church or society would take action are quoted from the records. ''1786 To see if the town will choose one or more persons to assist Capt. Russell in pitching the tune. Also to see if the town will vote that singing shall be performed a part or all of the time without reading the psalm. Voted that Capt. Stephen Russell be assisted by Joseph B. Varnum, Moses Nowel and Joshua Bradley in setting the psalm. Also that singing be performed in the afternoon without reading the psalm.''

The singing at the church service was at first unaccompanied by any instrument, so a pitch pipe, usually made of wood was used to give the pitch, and later when violins and bass viols were introduced opposition was made to their use because they were used at dances. These instruments with bassoons were used until melodeons and, later, church organs superseded them. ''Voted to appoint Capt. William Hildreth, Capt. Josiah Hildreth, Lieut. Israel Hildreth, Lieut. Abraham Coburn and Lieut Micah Hildreth to be a committee to see that the Meeting House Doors be kept Shut on the day of the Ordination till the Council and Delegates and the Church are Ready to Enter the Meeting house and then open them.'' In 1786, ''Voted that the minister



HON. ARTHUR W. COLBURN



DEACON JOSHUA COLBURN



DEACON SELDEN COLBURN

(See Pages 376-377)

shall preach in the easterly part of the town a proportion of Sabbaths equal to the proportion of money they pay. (Except those persons who are against their money going that way.)'' This was rather ambiguous but doubtless the meaning was understood by the voters.

After the decease of Rev. Thomas Parker, in 1765, a call was extended to Rev. Nathan Davis, which he accepted and he was ordained the same year. He served as pastor sixteen years when he resigned and severed his connection with the church. During his term of service one Dr. Joseph Hunt, of Concord, removed the body of Sarah Sawyer, wife of Oliver Sawyer, from the public burial ground, and a warrant was placed in the hands of Constable Bradley Varnum for his arrest. The details of this transaction are lacking, but the removal must have been illegal and measures were taken for his arrest. Dr. Hunt afterward applied for admission to the church at Concord, and a letter of recommendation was granted by Mr. Davis. For this he was severely criticised by the town people and in his letter of resignation, while not admitting the justness of this and other criticisms, he expresses the opinion that his usefulness as a pastor was ended in this town. He was afterward principal of the North Grammar School in Boston. In a newspaper published in Boston dated April 18, 1782, the following advertisement appears:

''TO BE SOLD
A House and Land in Dracut near the Meeting
Inquire of Nathan Davies in Boston.''

This property was the farm later owned by George M. Clark, whose house was located on the opposite side of the street from the site of the church building. There were no newspapers published nearer than Boston in which he could advertise while the statement ''near the Meeting'' might exert an influence on the prospective buyer. Dracut was fast increasing in population and the reserved land in the eastern section was becoming settled. By the loss of the northern part through the change in the Province line, as already noted, the shape of the town was materially changed, and was then about seven miles in length with a width

of about three miles. Previous to this time the meeting house was centrally located, but now the families in the eastern section desired better accommodation by having the site of the church building nearer the east. Protests were entered by the inhabitants of the other sections who presented their claims for a new house in their part of the town. It was probably on account of this disagreement that a proposition was made to divide the town in 1790 as already recorded, and unite the present western half with Chelmsford.

In 1783, at a time when this controversy was in existence, an entry was made in the town records which is difficult to explain, but studying it in the light of the difficulty experienced in the settlement of the location of the meeting house it seems probable that there was a connection between the two transactions. A petition had been presented to the town, but not placed on record, and this had been referred back to the petitioners to see how many would sign it who were in favor of annexing the east part of Methuen. It was voted "that those persons who signed the petition with the Homestead farms shall be voted off in order to see if they could join with the westerly part of Methuen in order to make a town." None of these changes were made and for more than a century Dracut retained the shape in which it was left in 1741.

In 1743 the demand for a new church building was urgent, but as no agreement could be reached in regard to the selection of the site, the town petitioned the General Court for permission to divide the parish, the annual appropriation to be divided between the parishes and the minister to preach at both churches. Lieut. Israel Hildreth, who at that time represented the district, was severely censured by some of the Dracut citizens for his failure to get the bill passed but at a town meeting held later the voters upheld him. The town finally decided to place the new church building in the geographical center of the town. This was unsatisfactory as the most families resided in the western part, but a survey was made and the center was found to be in the low land where, later, Mr. A. P. Bryant had his wheelwright shop on Pleasant street. As this place was not considered suitable for a church building, it was decided to place it on the higher ground where it now stands. But this

action was not allowed to be taken without a protest being signed by about forty inhabitants of the west part of the town and New Boston village. The signers gave reasons for their protest as follows:

"We the subscribers, inhabitants of said town hereby enter our protest against the proceedings of said town in voting to build a meeting house on this 31st day of December 1793 near the house of Kendal Parker Jr. 1st Because we denie that being the proper center of said town. 2d Because the situation and the land is by no means suitable and does not accommodate the people so well as where the meeting house now stands. 3d Because it is making a needless and unreasonable cost to the town, when the present house with but little expense might be made to accommodate the people and save the widows and orphans from a burdensome tax when they cannot have a voice in the business. For these and many other reasons we solemnly and firmly enter our protest against all the votes that any way relate towards the building a meeting house at the above described place & hereby show that we do not consider ourselves held to pay any cost that may arise thereby.

Lewis Ansart	Jacob Coburn
Thomas Varnum	Jonathan Varnum
Israel Hildreth	Nathaniel Coburn
Josiah Fox	Daniel Blood
Moses B. Coburn	Joseph Webster
Samuel Coburn	Thadeus Coburn
Parker Varnum	Saul Coburn
James Varnum	Peter Coburn Jr.
Ephraim Coburn	Samuel Cummings
Joseph Dean	Peter Coburn
Abraham Blood	Jonathan Morgan
Coburn Blood	Simeon Williams
Timothy Coburn	Solomon Abbott Jr.
Zachariah Goodhue	Ezra Coburn
Willard Coburn	Jabesh Coburn
Solomon Osgood Jr.	Willard Coburn Jr.
JonathanVarnum Jr.	Moses Clement

John Hamblett	Solomon Osgood
Jeptha Coburn	Jonathan Coburn Jr.
Jonas Varnum	Hezekiah Coburn
Life Wilson	Aaron Coburn."

Mr. A. C. Varnum in his "History of Pawtucket Church," records these statements: "But at length the town voted to build the house on the 'Central line' and put up the frame and boarded it; and there being two parties about evenly divided, some time the town would vote to finish one house, and sometimes the other and of course very little progress was made." About the same time some of the people bought a plot of land of Jonathan Taylor, about a mile westerly of the "Central line" and put up the frame of a meeting house upon it and boarded it.

The Jonathan Taylor land was on the north side of Hovey Square where the Blanchard hospital now stands. The deed which conveyed the land for a meeting house at the Center was dated January 14, 1794. The grantor was Obadiah Richardson, who conveyed one acre for the sum of 15 pounds to Parker Varnum, Joseph B. Varnum, Timothy Barker Jr., Richard Hall, Amos Bradley, Thomas Hovey, Moses Nowell, William Hildreth Jr. and Bradley Varnum, the committee appointed to purchase a lot on which to build a house and provide a common. It is described in the deed as "near Kindal Parker Jr's house on the north side of a townway leading from said Parkers to Prescott Varnums. The southeast corner was "six feet westwardly of a well called Miss Masseys well a few rods north of her house by or in the townway." Thence the line ran westwardly by a wall to the bars at the northwest corner of Kendal Parker's garden, then running northerly by the wall and townway leading to Nathaniel Jones' "so many rods as to compleat one acre, allowing the northerly end of said acre to be nine rods and one half, viz to run from the wall at the said town way eastwardly the said nine and a half rods to stake and stones thence southerly to the first bounds."

In October of the same year Richardson sold the town an additional strip of ten square rods on the east of the acre. The well mentioned was used in recent years and known as Widow Masseys well. She was the widow of Bartholomew Massey and

her homestead was that now owned by Henry N. Peabody. The families were more numerous and the citizens more prosperous at this time than when the second building was erected and this one was more speedily finished. In the meantime the sentiment in favor of building on the Taylor site at Hovey Square was so strong that by private subscription the frame of a church building was erected, as before stated, and, later, the town was requested to reimburse these men, but their request was refused. It was evident that the shape of the town rendered it difficult for the families of the west part of the town to attend church and the town decided to establish two parishes, one with the new building for a center and one at Pawtucket bridge as the center of the west parish. The building at the center was finally completed. It had enclosed stairways at both the east and west ends which led up to the galleries, with the front door facing the south. There was neither steeple or belfry and the whole structure had a barnlike appearance, which was characteristic of meeting houses at that time. The galleries were on three sides and so wide that there was only a square opening over the room below. The occupants of the rear seats of the gallery were obliged to stand to enable them to see the minister. Besides the townspeople who attended this church several of the families from East Chelmsford, as Lowell was then called, crossed the river at Bradley's ferry and were members of the congregation.

About 1812 the so-called Unitarian controversy among the Congregational churches commenced and continued for many years. It was mostly confined to Massachusetts. It has been stated that eighty-one churches in the state, with church property estimated at $600,000, by a decision of the Courts, changed denominational ownership and joined the Unitarians. About 1830 the trouble commenced in the First Church of Dracut and reached a climax in 1833. At this time an amendment to the constitution of the State permitted church property, which until this time had been owned by the town, to be held by the societies. No parish records of this time are in existence, but apparently the members of the church were outvoted and felt compelled to withdraw from the parish.

At a meeting of the church held October 23, 1833 it was voted "to choose a committee to procure a Gospel minister for the

church and such others as may meet with them when they are *deprived* of such an one in the Meeting House, as they shall consider it their duty to hear." February 6, 1834, Voted "to Hold the meetings for public Worship at Mr. Hanchetts Hall." This was in a building at Hovey Square, now the Blanchard hospital. February 18, 1834, the following resolutions were adopted. "Resolved, that in the opinion of the church all our hope of enjoying the ministrations of the pure gospel in connection with the first Parish were entirely cut off by the proceedings of the Parish at their meeting on the 6th inst, and that we are therefore obliged to leave the meeting house and make some new provision for the support of public worship that the faith of the gospel may continue with us." Mr. A. C. Varnum writes in relation to this subject: "In 1812 the 'Unitarian Controversy' as it was called, broke out among the Congregational churches and continued for many years. It did not extend beyond New England and was almost entirely confined to Massachusetts. Eighty-one churches with the church property in Massachusetts, during this controversy, by a decision of our courts, changed denominational ownership and went to those calling themselves Unitarians. The estimated value of this property was over $600,000. Among these churches was the old 'Mayflower' of Plymouth and every Congregational Church in Boston excepting the Old South. The Centre church in Dracut also added one to the number. The church organization, however, independently of the parish or society, retained its records and retired to Hanchett Hall nearby, where worship was continued until the 'Hillside Meeting House' near the Navy Yard was built, which was dedicated February 25, 1835, and where this church has worshipped until the present time. It still claims to be the First Church of Dracut and is called the First Evangelical Congregational Church."

It was further resolved to invite the Presbyterian church, at Pawtucket bridge, to unite with them and form a new society, but if they declined, that a new one be formed by themselves. As the Presbyterian church declined to accept the invitation, a new Parish was formed and the church retained the original name and organization. In 1834 a company was formed, for the purpose of building a new meeting house, which was incorporated

under the name of "The Proprietors of the Evangelical Congregational Meeting House." One hundred and twenty shares of stock were issued at twenty five dollars per share, to pay for the erection of the new building, at what is commonly known as the Hillside on Pleasant street below Hovey Square. At that time this was about in the center of the parish as there were no churches in Centralville. The trustees were authorized in case this amount was insufficient to issue additional shares to make up the deficiency. It was built in more modern style than the preceding ones and was, when finished, formally dedicated. At a church meeting held February 26, 1835, it was voted "That we accept of the privilege offered by the Proprietors of the Evangelical Congregational Meeting House and therefore in future will hold our worship and ordinances in said house agreeable to a vote of said Proprietors."

The pews were sold at prices ranging from $36 to $92. There was no income from investments in the stock, but occasional assessments and as the stockholders, in some cases, moved out of town these shares were gradually purchased by remaining members for a low price who had been greatly interested in the stockholders and the welfare of the Society. Thus the ownership was retained by these members and the rights of the church organization assured.

In 1869 the church received a legacy from the estate of Dea. Samuel Worcester which enabled the members of this organization to purchase from the stockholders enough shares to give the church a controlling interest and thus secure permanent occupancy.

The following is the fourth article in the constitution of the stockholders: "The house to be built shall be forever set apart for the preaching of the doctrines of the evangelical or orthordox faith and to the use of the present Evangelical Congregational Society in Dracut and the First Church in Dracut or the First and Presbyterian Churches if united as the case may be." It was necessary to form a society to manage the financial affairs of the church and a petition was presented to Elisha Glidden, a justice of the peace, to call a meeting. The warrant issued by him is dated February 26, 1834.

At this meeting a clerk, treasurer, collector and board of assessors were chosen, thus forming a legal body subject to the laws of the Commonwealth, by which the transactions of the society are governed. The annual meeting is held on the second Tuesday of March and the amount of money to defray the expenses for the year appropriated, officers are elected and new members admitted which can be done only under this warrant which calls the meeting which, however, may be legally adjourned to a fixed date. All business to be transacted which has a legal status, must be called by the assessors or clerk and the warrant posted seven days at least before the time of holding the meeting. Real estate may be owned by the society by virtue of its existence as a corporate body, while the church, having no legal existence, can hold it by right only under a special law passed in recent years. The society is responsible for the payment of the bills and has no part in the affairs of the church except the right to engage or dismiss the minister, which can be done only with the concurrence of the church, while the church as a body is not concerned in the financial affairs of the society. Briefly stated, the stockholders own the building, subject to the rights of the original owners of the land, the pews are owned by individuals, the society conducts the legal and financial affairs and the church attends to the spiritual duties. Aside from the supplies for the communion and insurance on the building and taxes on land bequeathed to the Church the church has no regular expenses, all bills being paid by the society. Few changes were made in the building for several years after its erection in 1834.

After 1860 alterations began to be made for the purpose of convenience of those who attend. The vestry was enlarged by occupying the space under the whole building, the pew doors were removed and arms substituted, a new, modern pulpit replaced the old high one, the location of the stairway leading to the vestry was changed, gas lights were installed and, in 1906, the town water introduced. In 1866 the gallery was enlarged in width to provide room for a new pipe organ which was purchased and which replaced the melodeon, the musical instrument of former years. In 1902 extensive alterations were made. An addition was built on the west side to which the organ was

removed, seats provided for the singers and the pulpit removed and placed near and in front of the singers' seats. The old pews were removed and new ones purchased and so located that they faced the west side instead of the south, as formerly. A new floor was laid and a steel ceiling replaced the old one which was of plaster and papered, the alterations were made at an expense of $2000.

On August 25, 1913, the First Church celebrated its 200th anniversary in a quiet manner. This was in place of the Sunday morning service and the historical address was delivered by Silas R. Coburn, who reviewed the history of the church from the time of its organization. Remarks by Rev. John Welch of Illinois, a former resident of the village, who was visiting in the vicinity, completed the exercises. In the absence of early records the exact date of organization could not be ascertained, but there was evidence that two centuries were completed since the church was formed. At the time of the building of the house at the Center, Rev. Solomon Aiken was pastor and his private church record is the earliest that we have, as earlier proceedings were entered briefly on the town books as regular business of the town. In the earlier years of the existence of the church the ministers were installed or given a settlement, but in more recent years the sentiment has not been in favor of this arrangement, but preferred to engage them for a specified term. A list of settled pastors is given:

Thomas Parker	1720 to 1764
Nathan Davis	1765 to 1780
Solomon Aiken	1788 to 1813
William Gould	1815 to 1817
Joseph Merrill	1820 to 1833
Epaphras Goodman	1836 to 1838
George W. Adams	1844 to 1846
Lyman S. Watts	1866 to 1867
Ernest L. Baker	1894 to 1897

May 26, 1920, a neat bronze tablet, placed in the auditorium, was dedicated in honor of the twenty-two young men who served in the war of 1917-18. Their names are placed on the tablet.

Unveiling of the Tablet

When the call came for soldiers to serve in the late World War, the response from the Hillside Church was hearty. In honor of the twenty-two young men who enlisted, the church people purchased and unveiled a neat bronze tablet. It represents, at the top, the emblems of our country, viz., the eagle and American flags. At the unveiling ceremonies the young men were present in uniform and the address was given by Hon. Arthur W. Colburn. George H. Stevens was chairman. William Ryder, who had served as a soldier in the English army in India, at the proper moment unveiled the tablet.

The inscription is as follows:—

1917 HONOR ROLL 1919

First Congregational Church of Dracut

A tribute to our patriots who served in the World War.

Forest H. Calhoun
Arthur H. Cashin
Harold A. Giffin
Ralph S. Giffin
Arthur E. Gunther
Edmund H. Gunther
Herman L. Hodge
Thomas D. Kearns
William J. Kearns
Harvey F. Kierstead
George Mozley
Herbert O. Nichols
Albert L. Pelton
Wilson H. Pollard
Caleb F. Rogers
George J. Sanborn
Benno W. Shafter
Raymond R. Stevens
Franklin W. Thomas
Frank R. Walters
James A. Walton

Died in the sevice of our Country
George Garner

"These gallant men of our armed forces have fought for the ideals which they know to be the ideals of their country."
—*Woodrow Wilson*, 1918

Pawtucket Church

When the protest of the people of West Dracut was unheeded, opposing the location of the new building at the center, the opponents of the arrangement withdrew and became, on June 27, 1797, a body which was incorporated under the name of The West Congregational Society in Dracut. On January 6th of the preceding year, James Varnum had given a deed of one half of an acre of land to Parker Varnum, Jonathan Varnum, and Peter Coburn, Jr., members of the committee appointed by the proprietors of the society above named, the price paid being the nominal sum of fifty cents. The new bridge had been built and the Mammoth road opened to travel which caused the locality to be well chosen, as there was a prospect of settlement by families at this place, while it was convenient for the people of East Chelmsford, now Lowell, to attend church. "Besides these practical and positive conveniences, there might have been a bit of romance considered, for this was the 'Ancient and Capitol Seat of the Pawtucket tribe of Indians and the spot where John Eliot first preached the gospel to them in 1647 and for many years afterward, as they gathered to obtain their supply of fish at the falls.'" (Hist. Paw. Church.)

The majority of those who had signed the protest of 1793 against the location of the meeting house at the center, became members of the new church. The unfinished building on the Taylor lot at Hovey square was demolished and removed to furnish material for the new building. It was built in the old style, as all meeting houses in that time were similar in the mode of architecture, and in 1820 a belfry was added and a bell purchased. In 1859 this bell was removed and a larger one was installed in its place. Although the members of the Society were responsible for the payment of the bills they were not exempt from taxation as the expenses for the church were paid by the town in common with other bills. The extra burden was too heavy for the new Society, and, in 1819, it joined the Presbyterian order. By this change their numbers were increased by the attendance of several families who lived across the river in East Chelmsford and who assisted in the Church financially as well as making it a strong church spiritually. The doctrinal belief of the two sects

is the same, but the difference consists in the government of the church, the Congregational being independent, while the Presbyterian is a member of a body called the Presbytery. In 1837 this church returned to the original form of belief which it has since retained.

When, in 1819, the church became a member of the Presbyterian body, the Legislature by an act passed February 1, 1820, granted permission to a number of families of East Chelmsford, now Lowell, to be connected, for parochial purposes only, with the Pawtucket Society. Thus the Society received an additional membership and their taxes for the support of the church would be collected for the benefit of this Society. The families who were thus permitted to join were:

Phineas Whiting
Nathaniel Wright
John Ford
Silas Hoar
Artemas Holden
James Bowers
Jonathan Bowers
Samuel F. Wood
Nathan Tyler
Josiah Fletcher
Joseph C. Hall
Otis Tyler
Nathan Tyler Jr.
Nathan Hunting
Nathan P. Ames
Joseph Dane
Ephraim Osgood
Simeon Parker
Lewis Butterfield
Zebulun Parker
Jeduthan Parker
Osgood Worcester
Joel Dix
Varnum Spalding
Robert Spalding
Micajah Bowers
Bradley Varnum
John Goulding
Samuel Hunt
Moses Chever Jr.
Amos Proctor.

Although the churches were under the control of the town, there seems to have been some of the citizens of the town who did not approve of the Presbyterian form of worship, and who were unwilling to be taxed to support a church not strictly holding the Congregational belief. In support of this statement there is in existence a petition for exemption from taxation which is as follows:

"Major B. F. Varnum Sir There is as we think a petition presenting or presented to the General Court for Leave to tax

the Pews in the Presbyterian Meeting House in Dracut we the undersigned wish you to attend and request an order of notice that we may be present and show cause why the prayers of the petitions may not be granted.

Dracutt May 28 1825

Phineas Coburn	Reuben Coburn
Joshua Marshall	Josiah Fox Jr.
William Webster	Wm. F. Osgood''
Solomon Osgood	

There is no further record to show the result of the presentation of this petition.

In 1844 extensive alterations were made in the interior, the square box pews were removed and more modern ones replaced them. The small, old-fashioned windows were enlarged and the pulpit rebuilt. A new parsonage was built in 1867, and later, about 1888, the old building was taken down and a new one built at a cost of about $20,000. In 1874 when the City of Lowell annexed this part of Dracut, the church ceased to be a Dracut church and its later history belongs to Lowell.

The Centre Orthodox Congregational Church

After occupying the old church building at the Center for several years, the Unitarians withdrew and the building became vacant. The families in this neighborhood and those residing at East Dracut decided to establish a new church and society. To accomplish this, thirty-six members of the First Church withdrew and organized a church under the above name. A council was called and the date of the organization is July 14, 1847. The following names of those who withdrew are:

Dea. Joshua Colburn	Phineas Richardson
Dea. Dana Richardson	Augustus Hovey
Joseph Hovey Sr.	Charles A. Thissell
Samuel G. Hallowell	Mrs. Lydia Varnum
David Richardson	" Lydia Hildreth
Adna Colburn	" Fanny R. Fox
Joshua Colburn Jr.	" Abigail Eastman
George Hovey	" Myra Stevens
Obadiah R. Varnum	" Hannah I. Peabody

Mrs. Elizabeth Cheever
" Clarissa S. Hovey
" Rebecca Hovey
" Nancy W. Hovey
" Prudence Richardson
" Emily S. Richardson
" Fanny V. Richardson
" Almira R. Coburn
" Lydia Colburn
Mrs. Hannah Colburn
" Sarah Parker
" Clarissa Colburn
" Mary Hovey
" Elizabeth D. Wood
Miss Prudence V. Fox
" Mary A. Fox
" Nancy Stevens
" Mary Fox

In the years which have elapsed since the organization of the new church there have been but three settled ministers. Their names are:

Rev. George W. Adams	1847—
" George Pierce	1863—1867
" F. J. Kelley	1898—1904

Soon after the organization extensive changes were made in the building. The outside enclosed stairways were removed, also the old pulpit which was replaced by a more modern one. The gallery seats were removed, but the floors were retained and with a new floor in the center a new audience room was provided in the second story with the pulpit at the east end and raised seats for singers with new pipe organ at the west end. The whole of the basement was used as a vestry, having settees in the center with the old box pews against the walls which remained until about 1860. The door at the west end was for the public entrance and two flights of stairs led up to the audience room, while the south door was used as a vestry door. Large, modern windows replaced the small, old ones. The outside of the building retained its bare, barnlike appearance and with its coat of yellow paint it was for many years a well-known landmark and known as "The Old Yellow Meeting House," by which name it was known for many years even after being painted white.

In 1869, a cupola was placed on the building and in 1884 an eight hundred pound bell was purchased. In 1897 the building was reconstructed and additions made to meet modern requirements, at a cost of about $15,000. Besides the audience

room which is located in the old building, there were added a chapel, ladies' parlor, kitchen and dining room. New furnaces were purchased and gas and water introduced. The grounds were enclosed which before had been common. Through the liberality of one of the members of the church a large pipe organ was installed. The dedication of the new building was held on July 8, 1897. On this occasion a beautiful baptismal font of Italian marble was presented to the church by one of the citizens of Centralville. The parish, incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth, is called The First Parish in Dracut.

Baptist Churches

In 1774 an act was passed by the General Court exempting Quakers and Baptists from taxation for the support of other denominations. They were simply required to file a certificate from the proper officers of their own denomination to the effect that they were members thereof and paid taxes accordingly. The town appears to have accepted this act in 1781. It was voted "to omit taxing to pay the ministers all who were assessed to Mr. Chapmans tax, and those proposed Baptists and all others who bring certificates from Rev. Mr. Chapman." March 7, 1785, the town voted to "excuse from ministers taxes all those persons who declare themselves Baptists." They had no house in which to worship and at a town meeting held April 7, 1817, requested permission to occupy the First Parish house a part of the time. For some reason not recorded the town refused permission. It is possible that they met in some private house or in some of the halls connected with the taverns as the Society was in existence a year later.

On May 17 of the next year, an article was inserted in the town warrant stating more definitely the time which they desired for occupancy. This was six Sabbaths from date to the first of the next March. This was also dismissed and no further applications were recorded.

Denominational lines were more strictly drawn than at present, which may account for the refusal of the request. There is reason to infer that they located at East Dracut and two halls at least were in existence in which they could meet. The

two entries on the town books and a subscription paper which has been preserved furnish all the records of the three years or more of the Society's existence. This is the copy of the paper. "We, the members of the Baptist Society in Dracutt, severally agree to pay the sums set against our respective names for the support of the Gospel in the said Society for the year of our Lord 1820." The names of the subscribers are those of families residing in the east part of the town although a few men of means in other localities assisted them financially. As they had no source of income except voluntary offerings the existence of the Society was brief.

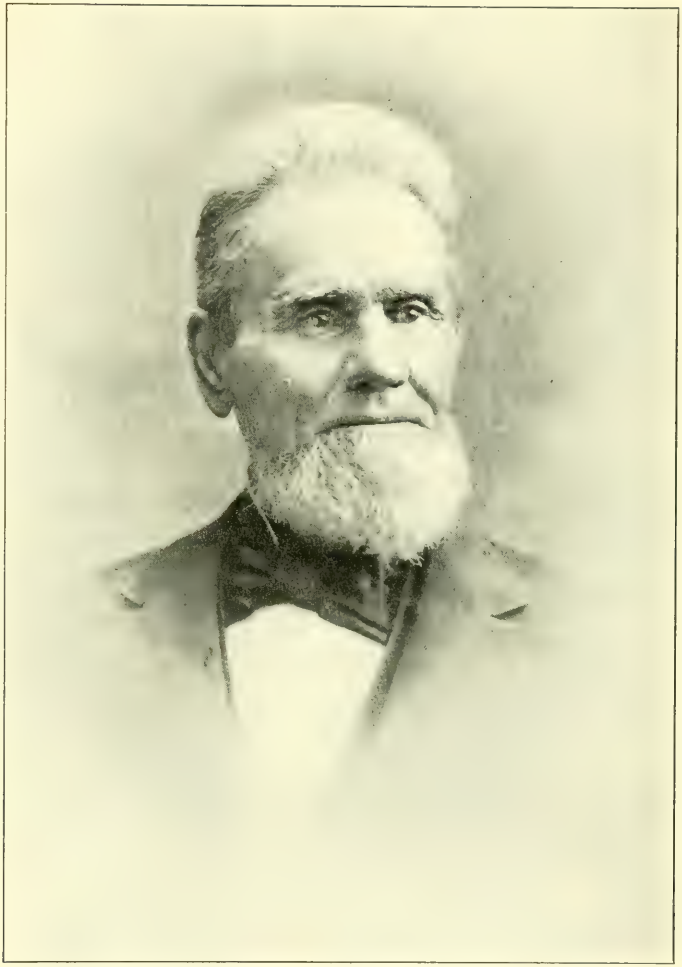
East Dracut Methodist Church.

After an interval in which there were no services held at East Dracut, the increasing population demanded a house of worship. The management of the affairs of the Churches had passed from the control of the town, and incorporated societies having the control were now independent.

By a deed dated October 10, 1849, a parcel of land was purchased by The First Methodist Society of Dracut of Hepsibah, wife of Oliver Richardson, and her sisters, Hannah and Elizabeth Bailey. The price paid was twenty-five dollars. The people were ready to assist in the establishing and maintaining church services, and funds were subscribed and labor given so that a neat building was erected and was opened for worship May 16, 1850. The first legal meeting was called by Colburn Blood in his capacity as Justice of the Peace and the first members enrolled in the Parish were:

Moses Bailey
Perez Hill, elected clerk
Uriel Warner
Thaddeus Richardson
Thomas Lewis
Asahel Clough
John W. Flint
Russel Richardson
Benjamin Stevens

The members agreed to associate themselves together for the purpose of supporting and maintaining religious worship and to form themselves into a religious society to be called the



DEACON ASA CLEMENT

(See Page 379)

First Methodist Society of Dracut. A constitution was adopted, giving the name and object of the Society in the first two articles. The designation of the officers, the time of meeting, the qualification of members, their rights and privileges, are all defined. For several years the church was well supported, but later those most interested in the work passed away, farms changed owners and families settled in the vicinity who had no interest in the church. Some families, realizing the need of religious instruction for their children, have organized and supported, for a time, a Sunday School and at different times church services have been held but, continuous services have been difficult to maintain.

The Collinsville Union Mission.

This Mission was formed November 15, 1897, and was established for the benefit of the families of the village, which had increased in size and population by the extensive changes made by Mr. Michael Collins. Land was purchased and a neat building erected. During the first years it was under the supervision of the Lowell churches and, while nominally Methodist, all sects are made welcome. There has been no resident pastor, but ministers from neighboring churches and Lowell have been interested to keep the pulpit supplied. It is now self-supporting and has no connection with other religious bodies. The prospects at the present time are favorable for the growth and extension of this church.

St. Mary's Catholic Church.

The need of a Catholic church at Collinsville was also greatly felt by the members of those families who were believers in the Catholic faith. For the benefit of such who desired to worship in this manner a neat building was erected by Mr. Michael Collins at his own expense, which while small, was large enough to accommodate the worshippers. It was in charge, for a few years, of the church located on Sixth street in Lowell and priests from that church officiated at the services, but later the building was enlarged, a residence for the priest erected and a resident-pastor was installed.

CHAPTER XII

MILLS AND INDUSTRIES

THE early settlers of Dracut found an abundant water power in the Merrimack river and its tributary streams in the town. The first kind of a mill to be built would be a gristmill for converting their grain into meal, malt and flour. Later, as they found time and means to build better houses in place of the buildings constructed of logs, saw mills were required and surplus lumber not needed for their own use was rafted down the river and sold. The first gristmill in the new town was probably the one which was built by John Varnum at the foot of Pawtucket falls near where the Textile school now stands. Here was an abundance of power and as a dam which would reach across the river would be expensive and unnecessary the water was conveyed to the wheel by the agency of a wing dam. This dam was built with the end extending a short distance into the river, and a few rods above the end which rested on the shore which formed a triangular space in which water enough would collect to furnish power to operate a saw or gristmill. This was built early in the time of the settlement of the town, as mention is made of a dam at this place in a record of the laying out of a road in 1710. A map of Dracut, dated 1791, locates a saw mill a short distance above Pawtucket bridge, but by whom owned or operated is unknown.

In 1822, Thomas Hurd, who owned a woolen mill on the Concord river purchased land of Parker and Jonas Varnum and Daniel Coburn extending from Pawtucket bridge to the foot of the falls with mill privileges. The deed conveys the "right to use so much of the water of the river at the mill site owned by me in common with the said Hurd as shall, with what the said Hurd now owns be sufficient at all seasons of the year to carry the wheels and machinery of a factory of the size and dimension of the brick factory on Concord river." Hurd erected a mill on his purchase about 1825, but soon afterward his mill on Concord river was burned and the mill at the foot of Pawtucket falls was removed and rebuilt on the site of the one which had been burned.

A part of the mill foundations remain easterly of the Textile school and at low water a part of the sill of the gateway may be seen. The abundant water power at the Navy Yard village was early utilized, but at what date is unknown.

The land on the west side of Beaver brook was owned by the Varnums. On February 23, 1739, James Varnum sold to Ephraim Hildreth one half of the stream and westerly side of the brook at falls "by mill called Hildreth and Goodhues mill, and all privileges that were reserved by said Varnum for use, benefit, and privilege of mill." Ephraim Hildreth, as before stated, purchased 1,300 acres of land on the east side of the brook which included the land now occupied by the Navy Yard village. This was in 1709, and the next year he sold to Ebenezer Goodhue, 16 acres adjoining the brook and extending from the falls in the brook to Merrimack river. Sometime between date of Hildreth's purchase and 1739 it is evident, from the wording of the deed from Varnum to Hildreth, that Hildreth and Goodhue had built a mill on the east side of the brook. The falls at that time were sufficient to allow two dams to be in existence at the same time and the lower one a few rods below Pleasant street remained until recent years. The mill to which reference is made was the one below the present bridge according to a deed now on record. December 16, 1756, Ephraim, William and Elijah Hildreth sold to James Martin "1-6 of the west half of mill dam adjoining to corn and saw mills owned by E. Hildreth and Z. Goodhue and others, being the lowermost mill dam on said brook, 1-3 of the land on which the dam stands 1-6 of west half of stream, also flowage and liberty to cut a sluice way, also 1-3 of the water of westerly part of the stream." This would locate Martin's purchase at the foot of the sand hill on which afterward the carpet mill and other buildings stood, but which at date of writing have nearly disappeared.

Josiah Richardson became a part owner of the mill on the east side, as in 1759 Martin purchased of him one-eighth part of the mill on the east side of the brook, but in 1762 sold it to Ezekiel Hale of Newbury, but retained the west half until 1769, when he sold all his rights in the mill property on the brook, also a dwelling house and blacksmith shop, also "easterly half of stream opposite with 1-3 part of new saw mill lately built, 1-3

of mill yard and 1-3 part of corn mill now standing on the easterly side of said brook."

Hale had possession of this property about twenty years and established a mill for fulling and dressing cloth which was woven by the inhabitants of the town in their own homes. His house stood on the north side of Pleasant street and was removed to allow the electric road to be built. It is now a few rods north of its former location; it has a frontage on Lakeview avenue and is numbered 1092. He died August 28, 1789, and is buried in the Hildreth cemetery. Capt. Hale was prominent in the town and was a member, at the period of the Revolution, of the Committee of Correspondence and Safety. The mills and mill property to which reference will now be made is evidently the present location of the mills. Exact information is difficult to procure on account of absence of records, but the careful study of this transaction will show that so far the references relate to the lower dam, while the record of the mills will show the location of the Hale property near the present site of the mills. He sold his property to his son, Moses, a few months before his death. It consisted of "½ of the corn mill on the west side of the brook" with the proviso that when there was a scarcity of water the fulling mill should be in operation 24 hours in a week. Also his dwelling house and barn on the east side of the brook, and all his rights in "the old corn mill that I was in partnership with, with Zechariah Goodhue."

From this transfer it seems that there were two corn mills and we locate one at the old dam below the present bridge and one at the dam above the bridge. Moses sold the property to his brother, Ezekiel, Jr., who, in turn, sold it to Joshua Bradley, November 1, 1792. It included the corn mill and fulling mill on the west side of the brook, also the dwelling house on the east side, "with 11-24 of the saw mill near the dwelling house with privilege of setting up a corn mill on the east with one half of the irons etc belonging." As no mention is made in the deed of the old corn mill, it had evidently disappeared. The deed also conveyed 21 acres on the south side of Pleasant street reserving to the owners of a saw mill at the lower dam a right-of-way through the land. No record of the time of the building of the lower dam can be found, but it was in use fifty years after the

transactions were recorded. It was located, as already stated, at the foot of the falls opposite the sand hill on which the collection of buildings known as "New England" was situated. All traces of the dam are gone, but an old sluice way has remained on the west side which shows where it stood. It was removed to give an opportunity for the better escape of the water from the wheels of the present mill. The following year, Bradley purchased 21-48 of the upper saw mill of Zechariah Goodhue with land "where the grist mill stood lately owned by Capt. Hale, deceased, and myself." The mills became known as Bradley's mills. In 1799, Ezekiel Hale, Jr., sold his remaining rights in the property to Isaac Bradley including "the scythe mill, workshop and dam." This was evidently the lower dam. The property passed through several ownerships and in 1814 was purchased by Jabez, Woodward, Artemas and Sewall Stanley of Bristol. The last two named purchased the rights of the others and erected a mill building on the property. They commenced the manufacture of cotton goods, but soon changed the machinery and later produced woolen goods.

About 1828, they became financially embarrassed and the property was seized by creditors who gave a five years' lease to Charles Stott, Joseph Garnett, Robert Whittaker and a Mr. Fitten, and they continued the manufacture of woolens. At the expiration of the lease, the business was sold to John and Thomas Nesmith, who commenced the manufacture of flannels, but soon removed their business to Lowell. In 1838, the property was sold to Darius Young, but in 1839 it was purchased by the Chelmsford Co. It consisted of land with flannel factory and gristmill and the price paid was $12,000.

From this time until 1853, no records are found but extensive changes must have been made, for in the last named year the Elliott Mills Co. purchased the property for $75,000. The deeds were signed by Harlan Pillsbury, Jonathan Tyler, James Waterhouse, Joseph F. Trott and Isaac Farrington. This company retained possession one year and sold to Thomas Barrows of Dedham and William Hilton of Boston. John Nesmith of Lowell became a partner and a company was formed under the name of the Merrimack Woolen Co. In 1858, this company was reorganized with a capital of $72,000 and the name changed to

Merrimack Woolen Mills. In 1860, the property was owned by Thomas Nesmith, Thomas Barrows and Walter Hastings. The manufacture of the cloth was in charge of Joseph and Alfred Chase, who received a percentage of the manufactured goods which were sold by a commission house. The buildings were old and not fitted for the increasing business and a more modern building was required to produce better results. As it was difficult to suspend the manufacturing on account of the large orders received, the Pearson Mills at Collinsville were purchased, the cotton machinery removed and woolen machinery substituted. In 1863, the Chases withdrew and Mr. Barrows' son, Edward, became agent. In 1862, a brick mill was erected on the site of the former wooden one, and equipped with new and modern machinery, and arrangements were made for more extensive business. The mill had been in operation but a short time when, in October, 1864, a fire broke out and totally destroyed the buildings, and a two-story house which stood on the opposite side of the highway.

Large orders had been received and the cloth was in demand, so the company arranged to operate the mill at Collinsville which they had recently purchased. The operatives were transferred to the new mill, the machinery was run night and day and the work of clearing away the ruins of the mill commenced without delay. As soon as possible a new four-story brick mill was erected with a two-story addition in the rear, to which recently another story has been added, new machinery was purchased and business resumed.

Early in 1864, the company had been incorporated as the Merrimack Mills of Dracut, capitalized at $500,000. For several years the new up-to-date equipment of the mills with the favorable condition of the times were productive of great success. But in 1873, as the result of dissensions among the stockholders, the plant was closed. In 1874, the property consisting of both mills was sold at auction to L. J. Stiastny of New York for $130,000. Several years of inaction followed. Property in the village decreased in value. Families living in tenement houses obtained employment in other places and removed from town. Others who had purchased homes sold at a sacrifice or found employment in the Lowell mills and remained.

In 1876, the mills at the Navy Yard village were taken on a lease by Solomon Bachman who, on June 19, 1880, purchased them for $120,000. In 1896, a company was incorporated as the Merrimack Woolen Mills Co. with a capital of $250,000, Mr. Bachman and his family retaining a majority of the stock. In December, 1901, it became necessary, in settlement of the estate of Mr. Bachman, whose death occurred in 1898, to sell the property at auction. In February, 1902, the mills were again put in operation with new ownership as the Merrimack Woolen Co. with August Fels, treasurer and manager.

Later in the year the property again changed ownership and while retaining its former name the greater part of the stock was purchased by Mr. E. G. Morrison and Mr. Arthur G. Meyer. At the present writing (1919) about 400 operatives are employed and the finished product consists of overcoating, cassimeres and cloaking, a line of goods for which the mill is especially equipped and for the production of which the managers provide the latest machinery. Under the present management important changes have been made. New buildings have been added, a tall chimney has been erected, in place of the metal smoke stack, which proved insufficient for the work and new wire fences take the place of the old, unsightly wooden ones.

Reference has been made to a dam on Beaver brook, south of Pleasant Street, where a saw mill had been in operation on the east side of the brook, in 1792. Before 1824, Merritt Wilder had acquired mill privileges on the west side of the brook and erected a mill building. No records exist to show the nature of the goods which he manufactured, but in certain deeds he is called a clothier. In 1827, he purchased land on the east side of the brook of Benjamin Bradley with the right to erect a mill. This right he sold in the same year to Theodore Hamblett. The deed conveys the right "to erect a mill or other building at the easterly end of the dam extending from said Wilders mill or works on the westerly side of said brook to the easterly side thereof, with right to use water for mills when not wanted by Wilder for his mills." Wilder mortgaged his property to Joseph Butterfield Varnum, who came into possession of it in 1828. Besides the mills there were, on the west side of the brook, about 3½ acres of land reaching from Pleasant street to the dam, also the

Bradley land on the east side which had been leased to Hamblett.

In 1840, Varnum sold the property on the west side of the brook to Perez O. and John H. Richmond who manufactured paper until about 1855. Later the mill building was purchased by the Woolen Mill Co. and used as a storehouse, but was burned about 1870. On the east side of the brook, Hamblett erected a saw mill and established a wheelwright business, besides building some houses on what is now Brookside street. He operated the mill several years, but the owners of the woolen mill, needing more room in the stream for the discharge of water from the mill wheels, purchased the property, removed the dam, filled the race ways, and no traces of mills or dam remain.

In 1825, J. B. Varnum erected a building for mill purposes on his land near the Wilder property, but a few rods away from the brook on the side of the hill, and opened a road from his residence to the mill at the bridge. He moved a house from Lowell and when the mill business was discontinued and the building arranged for tenements the group of houses was called New England. The building was two stories high on the back with a basement on the roadway. Hand looms were installed and carpets woven, pieces of which are in existence. By whom the business was conducted is uncertain. A few receipts and bills furnish all the information which we have been able to gather. One is for rent of machinery and buildings to Thomas Baker in 1847. In 1849, Baker purchased of J. B. Varnum five Brussels carpet looms with bobbins, one set of card plates with appurtenances and eleven sets of cards which Varnum had bought in 1847 of James Sener. The names of these two men are all that can be found in connection with the mill. Sener was probably unsuccessful and the machinery was purchased by Varnum in payment of rent due him. Later the business of manufacturing was discontinued, the buildings used for tenement houses, and now have nearly all been demolished.

Goodhue's Mills and Paper Mill.

About one half mile above the dam of the Merrimack Woolen Co. is a water power at present unused. At what time it was first

utilized is uncertain. May 18, 1767, Jonathan Varnum gave to Moses Goodhue a deed of the land on both sides of the brook extending on the north side from Lakeview avenue to the Old Meadow road. In 1807, Varnum sold three acres more to Goodhue on the south of the brook "adjoining said Goodhues land and mill pond." In 1793, Goodhue had purchased a narrow strip of land north of the brook extending from meadow bridge up the brook to "a dam that the said Goodhue had built." As there are no traces of a mill here or records of one to be found, the dam was probably built to hold the water in storage. Goodhue built a dam where one is now located and operated a gristmill and fulling mill which he had erected at the north end of the dam.

In 1817, he sold the property to his sons, Moses and Aaron, who continued the business which their father had established. Besides grinding the grain for the farmers, they carded the wool they had shorn from the sheep, and fulled and dressed the cloth which had been woven by the farmers' wives and daughters. Moses, Sr., lived near and westerly of the mill and the cellar of his house could be seen until recently. In 1831, the Goodhue brothers sold to Samuel G. Griffin and Darius Young thus terminating the Goodhue ownership of sixty-four years. The mills on the property were discontinued, a more substantial dam built and a paper mill erected.

The property was owned by several different parties on account of financial difficulties, but was purchased in 1839 by Perez O. and John H. Richmond, who removed from the mill at the lower dam at the Navy Yard village to this mill up the brook which furnished better opportunities for expansion. They conducted the business until the death of Perez, when March 5, 1856, the property was sold to A. J. Richmond and Leonard and Joseph Church. It was again sold in 1860 to Geo. Ripley, who, in 1870, sold to the Lowell Wadding and Paper Co. The company was succeeded by F. M. Spalding, later by George Lee, and in 1877 by John J. Donovan and Martin L. Bassett.

About 1883, Percy Parker became owner of the real estate and the business was conducted by Bassett under the firm name of M. L. Bassett & Co. For a time the business was prosperous, and to meet the demand for their product the owners doubled the

capacity of the mill by installing new machinery, increasing power by purchasing engines, etc. Unfortunately on February 27, 1900, a great freshet occurred which washed away the flume and undermined much of the mill, but not discouraged, the owners rebuilt and again commenced the manufacture of paper. But the delay had been fatal to their interests for their trade had been absorbed by other mills and in consequence the business was suspended and the machinery sold. With the exception of a short time, when the buildings were occupied by a rendering company, the mills were vacant. The buildings were allowed to decay and on the night of July 4, 1911, they were burned. Since that time no further use has been made of the mill privilege.

Mills at Collinsville.

Sometime previous to 1753, Joseph Hamblett of Pelham, N. H., came into possession of a farm and water power at the place now called Collinsville. This property was on the east side of the brook and in the year above mentioned he purchased of John Colburn land on the west side with rights on the stream "opposite Hambletts mills and dam." These were a gristmill and saw mill which he operated until March 13, 1773, when he sold the property on both sides of the brook to his son John. February 23, 1789, the latter exchanged properties with Isaac Parker, deeding to Parker 18 acres of land, a house and barn, a gristmill and seven-eighths of a saw mill on the east side of the brook.

From Parker and Hamblett the properties passed in turn to Life, David, Cyrus and Charles Wilson and was known as Wilson's Mills. In 1842, the land west of the brook passed from the mortgagees of Charles Wilson to Josiah and George Ames and Josiah Ames, Jr. Josiah, Sr., with his brother, Daniel, had purchased, in 1814, from David Wilson the land and mill property east of the brook. April 26, 1843, the Ames', who had conducted a wheelwright business, in connection with that formerly established, sold the mill property to John H. Pearson of Boston, but retained the farm and farm buildings and continued to conduct the wheelwright business.

About 1870, Josiah Ames, Jr., sold the farm to David McCoy of Pelham, who opened a slaughter house and established a retail business. Pearson increased the water power by adding to the height of the dam, paying to Nathaniel Varnum, Marcus L. Coburn, and others, certain sums for the right of flowage. Cotton machinery was installed and Peter Lawson of Lowell was employed to superintend the business. Large quantities of cotton goods were made, including duck, fancy table cloths, etc. In 1844, a thread mill was established. An article in the Boston Globe is quoted:

"Mrs. Martha Little Davidson spooled the first spool of cotton thread ever wound in America in the first thread mill ever erected on this side of the Atlantic. The first mill was erected by a Scotch capitalist from Boston. It was a crude affair run by water power and calculated for little else than the process of spooling, the thread being imported in hanks almost a finished product from the mills in Scotland. While this industrial adventure was backed by Boston capital, it was John and Peter Lawson, two brothers, Scotch emigrants, who were the moving power of the enterprise and under whose management it was conducted. It was for work in this mill and to teach the trade to a force of employees that Martha Little, then a maiden of 26 years, and her sister, Elizabeth, personally known to the Messrs. Lawson, were sent for to Paisley, Scotland, then the world's greatest center for thread manufacture. A three months' sail from Liverpool brought them to Dracut. Mrs. Davidson was the first to operate a spindle in the new factory, and in the month of June, 1844, through her hands the infant thread industry produced its first spool."

An acquaintance of Martha Little, Mrs. Hannah Stott whose home was in Billerica, once told the writer that she, when a young girl, visited these mills and saw the process of winding the spools. March 7, 1863, the Pearson heirs of Boston sold to the Merrimack Woolen Mills Co. all this property, receiving for it the sum of $19,500. This was sold as before stated to L. J. Stiastny of New York. The machinery remained idle for several years, when March 31, 1880, it was purchased by Michael Collins. Extensive changes were at once made. A large brick mill was built

in 1886, on the south side of the highway, and a flume constructed to carry the water underneath the roadway to the wheels. Tenement houses were also built on the land and new streets laid out. Machinery for the production of fine goods was installed. Stores were opened and the Government established a post office. At this mill, Mr. Collins employed about 260 operatives who produced annually 230,000 yards of cloth, principally beavers and cloakings. April 21, 1899, Mr. Collins sold the property to the American Woolen Co., which operated a number of mills in other places. The original wooden mill, three stories in height, was destroyed by fire and later replaced by a brick building used by the Company for the manufacture of shoddy. The plant is known as The Beaver Brook Mills of the American Woolen Co.

Saw and Gristmills and Other Industries

Double brook is the stream that drains Long pond. It crosses Lakeview avenue above the Collinsville mission building and, turning east, enters Beaver brook below the village. Near the old road leading from the village to Tyngsboro on the north side of the road near the Varnum buildings there is a fall sufficient to furnish power. On this fall the Varnums erected a gristmill which they operated until about 1860, when the business of grinding grain was discontinued. James Griffin of Pelham, N. H., leased the power and placed a grater and press in the building and made cider for several years, until he removed to Pelham. The building is still standing but since Mr. Griffin vacated it, no use has been made of it except as a storehouse for the farm.

In 1763, there is a reference in the town records to "Double Brook saw mill" and it is shown on an old map of 1791. No traces of a dam or raceway can be found and it is possible that the mill may have been located where the Varnum gristmill later stood. The volume of water in our brooks, which two centuries ago furnished in many localities sufficient power for the operation of mills, is now much diminished, if indeed the brooks are not quite dry. The ruins of old dams and existence of raceways give indications of former industries.

On Clay Pit brook, about a mile above Varnum avenue, a saw mill was owned and operated by Timothy Coburn. Traces

of the dam and sluice way remain while a thick growth of wood indicates its discontinuance many years ago. As early as 1698, an old deed mentions a dam on Flag Meadow brook, and from later deeds, it can be located about 40 rods above Varnum avenue and directly east of the Lowell General Hospital. Whether built to furnish power or to flood the meadows for the benefit of the grass does not appear. March 29, 1726, Ephraim Hildreth and Josiah Colburn, who owned the Winthrop farm on the Merrimack river, formerly the Symonds grant, sold to Joseph Varnum "a parcel of land and a place to erect a dam and set up a mill at the lower end of the meadow called Winthrops meadow on the brook that runs out of the meadow and a convenient cart road to the mouth of the brook called Winthrops brook by the west end of said Colburns house with liberty to raft in the mouth of the brook for a term of 30 years." Who operated the mill after the expiration of the 30 years' lease, is unknown. The Colburns owned the land on both sides of the brook until after 1800, when it passed into possession of Samuel Richardson and his sons, Samuel, Jr., David and Dana, after which it was called Richardson's brook.

The remains of the dam and sluice way with timbers and planking are to be seen a few rods below the Methuen road and west of the site of the Dana Richardson house. The remains of another dam may be seen on the same brook, a few rods above Kenwood schoolhouse, but as there are no indications of a building or raceway it was probably a storage dam, to retain the water in a basin from which supplies could be drawn to furnish power for the mill below.

In 1818, in a mortgage deed given by James Mansur to Benjamin F. Varnum, mention is made of a mill privilege and gristmill. This stood on West brook, east of the East Dracut Meeting house and on the south side of the road leading to Methuen. Mansur operated this mill, but later the farm was purchased by James Richardson and the mill building was removed and used for a shed.

As early as 1761, a saw mill stood on Bartlett's brook, which is the outlet of Peters' pond. It flows to the eastward over the Methuen line, where it is joined by West brook, before mentioned, and enters the Merrimack river. One Bartlett had

a mill on the brook in Methuen, from which the brook received its name. The saw mill, above mentioned, was above the road leading to North pond and Salem, N. H. In 1761, Josiah Gage and James Wilson purchased 72 acres of land of Thomas Parker and erected a mill. This was owned by several shareholders. In 1768, Gage and Wilson sold the land and one-fourth part of the mill to William D. Elliott who appears to have purchased the remaining shares and he, in 1782, sold land, dwelling house and saw mill to Mitchell Davis, who later sold to Richard Hall. The latter improved the property by building a storage dam above the mill and erecting a gristmill. A map of the town, dated 1798, locates this mill. Hall sold the property in 1805 to Thaddeus Richardson, who retained it twenty-five years and then transferred it to his son, Thaddeus, Jr. The latter sold it, June 13, 1846, to Oliver Richardson "7 acres of land with saw and grist mills." Under later owners the gristmill ceased to be operated and no signs of its existence now remain. The saw mill in still later years was discontinued and the building removed. In the pit the tub wheel with bevel gearing remain.

Tanneries

Tan House brook runs under Pleasant street, at the foot of the hill, west of the First Congregational church building. A few rods north of the street a tannery and leather dressing industry was established at an early date. On September 9, 1755, Ephraim Hildreth conveyed to Nathaniel Mitchell one acre of land lying on both sides of the brook, and mention is made of Mitchell's tan vats as located on the land. He operated the tannery until 1766, when he removed to Bradford, selling the property to Benjamin French, including the farm, later known as the Swain place. French retained the property until 1797, when he sold the land on the brook to James Whiting "with a tan house and other buildings." Whiting appears to have conducted the business until about 1805, when through financial difficulties it passed into possession of Isaac Bradley. Dr. Amos Bradley owned it from 1807 until his death, and in 1822 it was sold to Enos Blake, a tanner, and William Carlton, a cordwainer, as a shoemaker was called in those days. They retained the property until 1835, when they sold to Reuben Richardson.

He sold in 1838 to Levi Richardson who had purchased in 1831 a piece of land adjoining on the east and had erected a brick house which is still standing. He conducted the business until 1842, when he sold the real estate to Reuben Coburn who was a farmer and who later lived on the place. The deed makes no mention of the tannery, which probably was discontinued. Some of the vats were between the house and the brook, and have been found recently when the ground was plowed.

Northeast of the buildings formerly owned by Henry Wheeler, a butcher, and on this same brook is a dam. It is mentioned in a deed as early as 1793, as "an old dam." It may have been built to store the water as wanted for the tannery below, as no signs of a building or wasteway exist. The little brook between the house of the late Charles Coburn and the Dr. Hildreth place was the location of another tannery operated by Henry A. Hovey. A deed of the land from his father, Thomas Hovey, mentions the "Bash Vats." The word bash meaning to beat. Many years after the business had been abandoned and the vats covered over, they were discovered during excavations which were being made, and in them were found sides of leather of a superior quality caused by their long immersion in the tanning liquor.

Smaller Industries

One of the most noticeable changes since the earlier days of the town is the elimination of the smaller industries and the growth of companies to perform its work. The spinning wheel, flax wheel and hand loom, then to be found in nearly every house, are now seen only in a few museums. Where every village had its blacksmith shop, few remain, and the smith no longer shoes oxen or makes knives and farming tools. Butter and cheese are now made in factories. The cider mill, with the horse furnishing the power as he travelled in a circle while the boy sat scraping the pomace from the wooden nuts, has been replaced by the power mill with its increased capacity of production. The mill, with the upright saw, located at a convenient fall of water has been superceded by the portable mill with its circular saw and transported to the forest where the trees are felled.

Before 1814, Benjamin Hovey had a hat factory. His shop was on Pleasant street, nearly opposite Clark street, but in 1814, he sold the buildings to the Stanleys, who had bought the mills on Beaver brook. The shop was removed to the foot of the hill on Sladen street, where it now stands, being used as a tenement house. The Ezekiel Hale house, before mentioned as formerly standing on Pleasant street, where the car track now crosses the street, was once occupied, about 1818, by Thomas D. Doak and in which chairs were made.

About 1828, the mill property at the Navy Yard village was leased to Charles Stott and others. Herrick Allen subleased a room in the basement, where he manufactured brushes, but sometime after 1835, he moved to New Hampshire. Theodore Hamblet had a wheelwright shop on Brookside street, near his saw mill, and Josiah Ames, Sr., conducted the same business at Collinsville. In "New England" a house near the carpet mill was occupied by William Varnum, a son of Bradley Varnum, who manufactured rings and other jewelry. At Hovey Square, jewelry was manufactured by a man named Guillaume Louis Rose Fortune Berson. He occupied the Nancy Hovey house, a part of which is now standing. It was nearly opposite the Hildreth house, later owned by Henry Richardson. As the births of his children are recorded as occurring between 1802 and 1805, also his marriage, such record fixes the time of his residence in the town. Daniel Abbott manufactured bed posts, turning them on a lathe in a shop near his house. On Marsh hill, wood turning was done by Russell Fox at his home. At the larger farms cider mills were in operation and the owners ground the apples for their neighbors. Nearly all of these industries have been superceded by large plants, conducted more economically.



THE OLD NAVY YARD SCHOOLHOUSE

(See Page 227)



DRACUT CENTRE SCHOOLHOUSE

(See Page 229)

CHAPTER XIII.

SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES AND LYCEUMS.

OUR forefathers realized the value of education, and as early as 1647 a law was enacted requiring every township in which were fifty householders to provide a schoolhouse and employ a teacher, and all towns having 1,000 freeholders should provide a grammar school. It is uncertain how early schools were established in the town, but we have unofficial records which show that the Rev. James McGregor taught a school in town in the winter of 1718-19. The earliest town record relating to the subject is that on October 1, 1736, an agreement was signed as follows:

"We, the subscribers in the town afore s^{d} agree with Mr. Phineas Stevens of Andover to keep a Reading and Wrighting scool In Dracutt three months Beginning on or about the 20th of this Instant October for which he Is to Receive twelve Pounds In Bills of Creddit as witness our hands

PHINEAS STEVENS
EDWARD COLBURN
JOHN VARNUM
JOHN BOWERS
} Selectmen of Dracutt"

In 1738, it was voted "to hire a school for reading and writing to be held two fifths of the time at the west end, two fifths at the east, and one fifth at the north end." May 18, 1750, it was voted "to keep the school at one place in Dracut this present year." As there were no buildings especially for school use it was voted to keep the school at Ephraim Hildreth's house. March 5, 1787, it was voted to lay out the school money in "eight different squadrons," another name for school districts of which the first mention occurs in 1780. There were the Sawyer squadron, the Nor'East squadron, the Hill squadron and others. In 1790, it was voted to divide the town into six districts which later were increased to thirteen.

In 1755, the town voted "that if the inhabitants of the southwest part of the town will vote to build a school house on

the land of Dea. Edward Coburn on the north side of the road betwixt Deacon Edward Coburn his house and Samuel Coburn's house, that they shall have the school kept there according to their proportion of the taxes." As in the next year the town voted to accept the schoolhouse, it is evident that one was built. In 1821, Ephraim Coburn conveyed to the First School District "a tract of land" where the schoolhouse has formerly stood. The condition was that "the district should build a schoolhouse on said land." This building is now occupied by the Coburn Mission.

As it was erected by the district and not by the town, the action is not recorded on the town books and the omission has led to the error that the building was the original one instead of the second. Pawtucketville was District No. 2 and had two school buildings, both of which are now standing. There were no settlements about here requiring a schoolhouse, as until the bridge was built it was open country, but later as the families increased a new building was demanded and a district formed. The first building was moved from Lowell and at first located near the river, but about 1825 was again moved to its present position on the west side of the Mammoth road, near the cemetery. The lot secured for the building was a large one, including the land where the later one stood. This building was moved a few rods away and was converted into a cottage, and a new and more modern one was erected on the site. This section was annexed to Lowell in 1874, and the building has been used as a library, reading room and club room. The Collinsville district was in existence before the Pawtucketville section required a schoolhouse, and was formerly district No. 2, but now is No. 3.

There have been three school buildings, all of which are now standing. The first one is located in Varnum's survey of 1831 as "three rods from Daniel P. Coburn's and 38 rods to Hugh Jones'." It is still standing in the same location and forms a part of the barn now at the residence of Mrs. George B. Brown. The old windows which were at the west end of the building still remain and can be seen from Mammoth road. On the west side of the Mammoth road and nearly opposite this building there is a tenement house which was for many years the second schoolhouse which was two stories in height to accommodate

the increased population of the village. When the present school building was erected, this building was removed a few rods and sold. The present building was originally a four-room house, but later on addition was made, increasing its capacity.

The Navy Yard was District No. 4, formerly No. 3 West. This district has had five school buildings. In 1828, the district purchased a lot of land on Pleasant street, near Riverside street, of J. B. Varnum. In the deed reference is made to the location as "where the old school house stood." The building erected on this lot after its purchase, is now used as a dwelling house, but retains its original shape with the exception of the removal of the belfry. About 1865, a new two-story building was erected on a lot a little to the east of the old one. This was afterward burned. After the annexation of a part of the town to Lowell in 1874, a new schoolhouse was built north of the village on Parker Avenue, resembling in general shape the one at Collinsville. In 1906, owing to the increase in the number of pupils, a two-room building was erected on Sladen street, near Pleasant street, and is called the Goodhue school.

District No. 5, formerly No. 3 East, has had four schoolhouses. The first was nearly opposite the First Congregational church building on Tan House hill. June 4, 1798, Jonathan Taylor conveyed to William Hildreth land and buildings, now the Blanchard Hospital, "reserving liberty for the school house to stand on the land it now stands on as long as the said school house shall last." The second building stood on land now a part of the Hildreth Cemetery nearly opposite Sutherland street. The third building stood on the east side of Hildreth street and was built about 1831; it was called the old red schoolhouse. The fourth was built after 1870 and stood on the west side of Hildreth street near Pleasant street and west of the common but the annexation of a large part of the district to Lowell made it of no value for school purposes and it was sold and is now a dwelling house. The district which included Christian hill was formerly No. 6 and the first schoolhouse stood on the west side of Tenth street, about 75 rods north of the Fay buildings on land of Ephraim Wood. When it was no longer needed for school purposes, Stephen Wood, a brother of Ephraim, moved it to Marsh hill and occupied it with his family. The

second building, after some controversy, was erected on Tenth street about 1834. It was built of brick and was sold in 1847 to Joseph R. Tibbetts, who taught a private school, but is now used as a dwelling house. The district then purchased the building on Myrtle street, formerly owned by the proprietors of the Central Village Academy. In 1851, this section was annexed to Lowell.

New Boston district was the new No. 6 and has had three schoolhouses. The first stood on the triangle at the junction of the Old Meadow road and Hildreth street, south of the Crosby buildings. A description of this building will apply to others of the same period as the same general plan was followed: It was square with a four-sided pitch roof, the roofs forming a point in the center. It had an enclosed porch which contained hooks for clothing and hats. The teacher's desk, raised a step from the floor, was opposite the door, and in the center of the room was the floor where the classes stood at recitations, while on each side of the room were desks and seats for the scholars. The center floor was level, but at the outer wall it was raised forming an inclined plane. The tops of the desks were of oak plank, two inches thick, and the seat for each desk was attached to the desk in the rear. A board extending the whole length of the building on each side against the wall formed seats for the older pupils. The building was sold about 1870 and removed to Lowell.

The second house was located across the road, a few rods northwest of the first one, but it was destroyed by fire about 1875. The third house was like the second, built in more modern style and located on Hildreth street, on land belonging to the Foster farm. After a few years of occupation as a schoolhouse, the number of pupils diminished until the town decided to close the school and transport the children to the school in the Navy Yard district, and the building was sold and removed to Colburn avenue, where it is used as a residence. The district at the Center was No. 7, but in 1790, it was designated as No. 4. This is the first building in the district of which there is any record and in the last year named it was voted to set the schoolhouse "between Isaac Fox's Cyder mill and the road to Winthrops meadows" which was the present Methuen road. Isaac Fox

lived on the farm known as the Archibald Varnum farm and later owned by George D. Coburn. As this building became unsuitable for the increasing population of this vicinity, a new one was built on the common at the intersection of Broadway, Arlington and Willard streets. As the erection and care of the building was under the supervision of the district, no records are to be found on the town books, and it is only from other sources that information in regard to dates of building can be found and in most cases these dates cannot be determined with accuracy, but it is known that this building stood on this common as early as 1831. This building becoming antiquated, a new one containing two rooms was built nearer the center of the district, and after a few years' use was remodeled and the lower rooms used for the town office, and the library and museum were located in the upper rooms.

The extension of the electric road to the Center again increased the number of families and the new building was not suitable for school purposes, so it was abandoned and a new one built on modern lines near the end of the car line. Marsh hill was District No. 8. There was no building for many years which was used for a schoolhouse, but the children were taught in the farmers' houses. In 1753, the school master was David Fox, Sr., whose son David, Jr., was a revolutionary soldier. His farm was the one now owned by Mrs. Eben T. Fox and the school children met at his house for instruction. Three quarters of a century later the school was kept in the farm house on the same farm then owned by his grandson, Samuel Fox. The first schoolhouse in this district was built in the old style already described, and was standing in 1831. At that time it had been newly built. The building with woodshed covered the lot, thus leaving no place for a playground or yard. About 1855, the floor was lowered to a level position and the desks rebuilt. In 1880, a new one was built, so placed that there was a school yard in which the children could exercise. In a few years the town discontinued the school and transported the pupils to the Center. It is now used as a residence.

In those earlier years the boys were taught to bow to the teacher when entering the schoolroom and the girls to "drop a

courtesy," while out-of-doors they must bow respectfully to any one who passed by the school.

The Kenwood District was No. 9. The first schoolhouse stood a few rods east of the cross road leading north to the Methuen road. It was on the north side of the road and until recently the doorstep marked the spot. The land upon which it was built was donated by Samuel Varnum 4, son of Joseph 3, who purchased the Prime lot which was the sixteenth lot on the river.

The second building was located nearer the present one, but soon became too small for the rapidly increasing population and a new one, built in 1900, which was enlarged in 1911, and a bell weighing 350 lbs., placed upon it. No. 10 was called the Jones' district and was situated between the Center and the Methuen line. The first building, so far as is known, stood on Broadway, further east than the present one. It was built in the same style as the earlier ones were but, unlike the others, there were heavy oak timbers on each side of the aisle with mortices into which the desks were set and over which the scholars must step to reach their seats. The chimney projected downward into the room about two feet and was supported in its place by hangers fastened to the overhead beams. After 1860, the building was repaired and to some extent its interior features were changed, but when the school was discontinued it was very dilapidated. It was sold and used for several years as a dwelling house but was later destroyed by fire.

After transporting the pupils to the Center for a time, a new building was erected at the corner of Broadway and the cross road leading to Burns' hill. District No. 11 was the Black north or East Dracut district. There have been three schoolhouses in this district. The first one becoming, after several years, unfit for use, a second one was built on the same lot of land, and when a new one was built the old one was used as a club house. The third one was recently built on a more modern plan with large playground, it stands on the opposite side of the road from the lot where the first ones stood.

The district numbers have been changed at various times. In 1830, the numbers were, No. 1, the west part of the town; No. 2, Collinsville; No. 3 West, the Navy Yard village; No. 3

East, Hovey square; No. 4, the Center village; No. 5, Kenwood; No. 6, East Dracut; No. 7, New Boston; No. 8, Marsh hill; No. 9, Broadway; No. 10, Christian hill. In 1851, when annexed to Lowell, the last named was number 6.

The building of Pawtucket Bridge caused a new district to be formed, which until annexation was No. 2, and the numbers of some of the others were changed. In the last annexation the West Dracut, Pawtucketville and Hovey Square districts ceased to exist, but the numbers of the other districts remained unchanged.

During the first century of the existence of the town the length of the school term each year did not exceed three months. The winter months were the ones when the boys could best be spared from the work on the farm and these were considered sufficient to give the pupils an education. In each room there was a large fireplace which, while furnishing abundant heat, was able to warm the room but little as the most of the heat escaped up the chimney, but by collecting about the fireplace they could be kept comfortable. There was an abundance of wood and it was the duty of the older boys to keep the fireplace well filled. Later, when stoves were introduced, the room was more evenly heated. No janitors were employed but the boys attended to the kindling of the fire and shovelling the snow, while the girls swept the floor.

It was customary for the teacher to report in writing to the Superintending School Committee a list of the names and ages of the scholars, a list of the studies, number of weeks in a term and compensation received. A few of these reports have been preserved and from them information has been gathered relating to early school days. None earlier than 1817 are to be found and while from old people we learn that before this time only reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic were taught, these reports inform us that grammar and geography classes were formed and, in one school, a history class existed. Other studies are given as "testament," "alphabet," words of one syllable and words of two syllables. The number of pupils in the town would average about forty to each district.

In 1830, there were ninety-nine who were taught by one teacher at the Navy Yard village. The highest salary paid was

$5 per week, including board and was paid to a graduate of Dartmouth College. Other male teachers received $3.50 per week including board, which was reckoned at $1.50 per week. Female teachers received, besides their board, $1 per week and, in one district, the sum of 92 cents per week was paid. A teacher sometimes "boarded around," living a specified number of days with each family. In some instances when the school money was expended, the teacher would remain a few weeks to teach pupils who desired further instruction, receiving their compensation from the parents of those attending. Private schools would also be opened in the spring and autumn months which were beneficial to the young people and which were well attended. In 1860 Josiah S. Phillips taught a private school for several terms in the vestry of the Old Yellow Meeting house and had good success.

The schools have been conducted under both the town and district system. Under the last named system a Superintending Committee composed of three was appointed who had a general oversight of the schools. They examined the teachers and accepted or rejected them as the case might be, they selected the text-books which were owned by the pupils and recommended certain lines of studies. In addition to the general committee, the district would select a man who was called the Prudential Committee. He employed the teacher, subject to the approval of the general committee, purchased supplies and kept order when unruly scholars refused to obey the teacher. They also attended to the expenditure of the money allotted to each district by the town. The schools at the present time are conducted on the same general principles but differ in detail.

Dracut, with three other towns in the vicinity, employs a Superintendent while this town appoints a general committee of nine at its annual meeting. This committee assigns certain duties to each of the members, certain ones purchasing supplies, others attending to transporting of pupils, others having charge of repairs, the Superintendent overseeing and advising when necessary. This system was adopted in 1881. Truant officers are also appointed who attend to absentees. The town employs Supervisors of Music and the Manual Arts are also taught. Until recent years no pianos were provided or music as a study

taught. Scholars sang songs led by the teacher or one of the older scholars. Exhibitions are now given in which the scholars display specimens of drawing, leather and burnt-wood work, etc., which they have prepared.

For several years preceding and following 1850, the school committee prepared reports which the town clerk entered in the town records, but which are now embodied in the annual printed report of the town. In 1829, the amount appropriated for the support of schools was $600; in 1858, $1,500, and in 1919, $31,800.

Dracut has seven school buildings, valued as follows: Center, $14,000; Collinsville, $14,000; Parker Avenue, $10,000; Kenwood, $10,000; Goodhue, $8,000; East Dracut, $4,000; Broadway, $2,000.

In 1911, penny savings banks were introduced in each school as an encouragement to the cultivation of habits of thrift and the money deposited in the Savings Banks. By this system, pupils may deposit in small sums which are entered in a deposit book to their credit.

It is in order to mention another private school which, although the building was located in Pelham, the pupils were principally from Dracut. The length of the school term, while extending over a period of six months, was an improvement over the earlier three-month period but still unsatisfactory. A private school was opened having a Spring and Fall term. In 1853, Capt. Gilbert Coburn of Pelham, N. H., whose farm was partly in Dracut, built a schoolhouse on his land, employed a teacher and gave notice that for a small weekly fee scholars would be received. The parents of the children living in the vicinity realized the advantages of this arrangement and the house was soon filled. While the Marsh hill and New Boston districts furnished the greater part of the scholars, some came from other districts, securing boarding places on the neighboring farms. The extra instruction thus received was of great benefit in later years to these pupils.

Central Village Academy

In 1833, a number of the citizens of the Centralville district which, in 1851, became annexed to Lowell, perceiving the need

of better educational facilities for the children, formed a company which was incorporated March 1st, of that year, under the name of "The Proprietors of the Central Village Academy." The president was Joseph Bradley. Benjamin F. Varnum was treasurer and Jefferson Bancroft, secretary. June 6, 1833, they purchased of Elisha Fuller, Josiah B. French, Joshua Bennett and Joseph Bradley four lots of land comprising 18,400 square feet, "bounded westerly on Chestnut and easterly on Elm streets"—these are now Myrtle and Beech streets—on condition that a building for school purposes be erected in one year from the date of deed, and a school maintained for at least five years. The price paid for the land was $1,200.

The school was opened in 1836 with Isaac Witherell, A. M., as principal and numbered ninety-one pupils. The building was commonly known as the Dracut Academy and is described as follows: "It was a plain two-story wooden building with square belfry on the end of a pitch roof; it stood end to the street and well back from it: there were two deeply recessed entrances in the end with a window over each door; an ornamental casement in the gable completes the picture. It looked as much like a country church as a school house. A good sized bell with a brisk, cheerful voice called the school morning and afternoon. Robert L. Read 'pulled the bell' but many willing hands were ready to help, even the girls thought it rare fun to cling on and be pulled up as the bell swung over." Succeeding Mr. Witherell as principals, were Benjamin F. Butler, Rev. Mr. Cutler, Rev. Cyrus Mann, William G. Russell, Rev. John C. Ingalls, Henry F. Durant and Charles Morrill.

The school seems not to have met with the success that was expected and the number of pupils diminished. Gen. B. F. Butler in his book says: "In the autumn of 1839 a vacancy occurred in a small academy in the town of Dracut across the Merrimack river, and the trustees asked me to take charge of the school. For my services I was to receive the tuition paid by the pupils and that depended upon the number of scholars. It was a queer school. There were twenty-one scholars about sixteen of whom were boys. The large portion of them were pupils who had found cause to leave the schools in Lowell, generally not because of their virtues. They ignored all discipline

and had routed the former preceptor. I, by habit of mind, was a disciplinarian so that it happened at the end of three weeks I had lost eleven scholars out of my twenty-one, but no one of them had gone away without a thrashing, the remembrance of which would last him a lifetime."

The school passed under Free Will Baptist control and an effort was made to conduct it along more practical lines. From an advertisement in a Lowell newspaper of June, 1842, we quote: "The location of this school is surpassed by few if any in New England. There is connected with it a large and convenient boarding house, a workshop, a small track (sic) of land and a cap shop for the ladies, so that individuals, both male and female, may in part at least, defray their expenses if they choose." In 1843 the building was purchased by the district (then called No. 6) and the district school established therein. After the annexation of Centralville to Lowell, in 1851, the city had a grammar school in the building until it was superceded by a more commodious brick structure. The old academy building was then removed to Bridge street where it was occupied by the Woods, Sherwood Co. from 1866 to 1910. It is now owned by Miss Martina Gage.

A list of the names of the pupils who attended the academy in 1836 has been found in a circular which has been preserved and in which many names are found of residents of the city at a later period in its history.

Directors

Joseph Bradley, President
Hon. Benjamin F. Varnum
Jonathan Morse, Treasurer
Joshua Bennett
Humphrey Webster

Secretary

Jefferson Bancroft

Trustees

Kirk Boot, Esq.
Rev. Theodore Edson
Elisha Bartlett, M. D.
Joshua Swan, Esq.
Rev. Amos Blanchard
Joseph B. Varnum, Esq.

William Austin, Esq.
Luther Lawrence, Esq.
Dr. Jesse Fox
John Clark, Esq.
Oliver M. Whipple, Esq.
Hon. Nathan Wright

Teachers

Isaac Wetherell, A. M., Principal
Mrs. Isaac Wetherell, Assistant
Miss Sarah A. Copland, Teacher of Music

Pupils—Male Department

Joseph Bradley, Haverhill
William H. Bradley, Dracutt
Augustus Bradley, Dracutt
William Brown, Lowell
George W. Coburn, Dracutt
Joseph B. V. Coburn, Dracutt
James M. Coburn, Dracutt
David Dana, Jr., Lowell
Ebenezer Hanchett, Jr., Lowell
Fisher A. Hildreth, Dracutt
James F. Huntington, Lowell
Joseph G. Kittridge, Lowell
Moses L. Knowles, Lowell
Daniel Mansfield, South Reading
George W. More, Dracutt
Alanson O. Ordway, Lowell
William W. Reed, Dracutt
Enoch M. Reed, Dracutt
Charles F. Reed, Lowell
Edward F. Sherman, Dracutt
William P. Spaulding, Lowell
Francis B. Stanwood, Lowell
Ephraim Stevens, Manchester, N. H.
Natt Stickney, Dracutt
Joseph E. Sweetser, Lowell
Joseph W. Tapley, Lowell
Joshua Thissell, Jr., Dracutt
Frederick W. Tuxbury, Pelham, N. H.
Joseph B. Varnum, Dracutt
John Waugh, Lowell
Timothy Webber, Lowell
Abel A. Wheeler, Lowell
James W. White, Lowell
Edward Wilson, Dracutt
William H. Wood, Lowell

Total number—35

Female Department

Emma C. Bamford, Lowell
Margaret M. Bartlett, Plymouth
Jane E. Bartlett, Plymouth
Elizabeth Bell, Chester, N. H.
Louisa W. Bradley, Dracutt
Mary J. Bradley, Dracutt
Harriett Bradley, Dracutt
Susan Burnham, Pelham, N. H.
Margaret W. W. Borland, Dracutt
Joan C. Caryll, Lowell
Mary A. Coburn, Dracutt
Lauretta Coburn, Dracutt
Elizabeth Dana, Lowell

Olivin P. Eastman, Lowell
Mary A. Farnsworth, Harvard
Mary A. French, Lowell
Civvil M. Fry, Lowell
Belinda P. Hadley, Chelmsford
Maria J. R. Hastings, Lowell
Susan Hildreth, Dracutt
Harriett Hildreth, Dracutt
Lucinda Hill, Dracutt
Mary J. Hill, Hopkinton
Harriett Kimball, Lowell
Joanna Kittredge, Dracutt
Hannah Kittredge, Dracutt
Lucy P. Lawrence, Lowell
Sophia J. Lyon, Pelham, N. H.
Martha P. Merriam, Chelmsford
Louisa J. Murdock, Lowell
Cornelia M. Murdock, Lowell
Ann M. Parker, Lowell
Jane M. Parker, Lowell
Sarah A. G. Paul, Lowell
Marietta Reed, Lowell
Sophia Richardson, Dracutt
Artemisia Richardson, Tewksbury
Lucian Rollins, Lowell
Margaret B. Rollins, Lowell
Nancy W. Rollins, Lowell
Sarah Shedd, Lowell
Alsey Stevens, Dracutt
Mary J. Tapley, Lowell
Sarah A. Tapley, Lowell
Caroline B. Varnum, Dracutt
Mary B. Varnum, Dracutt
Susan H. Varnum, Dracutt
Mary A. Webster, Dracutt
Elizabeth White, Lowell
Irene C. Wight, Dracutt
Jerusia B. Wight, Dracutt
Charity B. Winslow, Lowell
Eliza A. Wood, Lowell
Mary M. Worthen, Dracutt
Susanna Wyman, Lowell
Sarah A. Wyman, Lowell

Total number—56

Singing Schools

Until recent years, music has not been taught in the public schools, but instead of this method of instruction singing schools have been conducted in different parts of the town by private enterprise. About 1825, Josiah Griffin of Methuen taught a school at Dracut Center. A few years later, in Districts No. 7 and No. 9, these schools were conducted by the brothers Phineas and Edward Richardson. About 1860, Mr. Pinkham of Lowell taught a school at Dracut Center. At the vestry of the First Congregational Church of Dracutt the brothers Coffran and Vespasian Nutting taught, followed by Prof A. D. Greeley of Pelham, N. H., who also taught at the Center. In 1870, Shapley Morgan taught several terms and the last terms were in charge

of Charles P. Hutchinson. The long evenings of the winter seasons were favorable to the young people of the town who met for instruction in singing.

Lyceums

To those who were unable to sing and who may be found in each generation, the lyceum provided an opportunity for instruction in debate which was of value to the citizens when attending town meetings or serving in the Legislature. In 1829, a society was formed under the name of the "Dracut Mutual Debating Society" of which the secretary's record is preserved. The earliest date is Dec. 1, 1829, and the list of members comprises the most prominent and influential men in the town. They were farmers, physicans, manufacturers, lawyers and ministers, and the records show that these debates were interesting and instructive. The first question was presented by John A. Doak: "Is reading novels beneficial to society?" This, after discussion, was decided in the negative. Another question was "Has wine or women been the cause of the greatest evil to society?" By a vote of 16 to 1 it was decided that wine was the greater evil. The record terminates abruptly in the spring of 1830 with a vote to meet in April for the transaction of special business.

A lyceum was organized at the Center about 1855. It is said to have been very successful, but no records have been found. This was not strictly a debating society, but included recitations and a paper was presented at each meeting prepared under the direction of an editor and to which the members contributed articles of poetry and prose. About this time a lyceum was organized and meetings held in Goodhue's Hall, which was in a building now at the corner of Lakeview Avenue and Pleasant Streets. It was conducted along the same line as the one at the Center.

Libraries

The town library was not established until a recent date. It was among the last of the towns in the state to provide in this manner for the benefit of the public. This was not on ac-

count of an absence of desire for intellectual study or recreation, but rather on account of the shape of the town which is long and narrow and composed of four villages, which prevents the gathering of the public buildings at any place which accommodates the town. There was a small library owned by each district which was placed in some farmhouse near the schoolhouse and to which the scholars had access and the privilege of reading the books. These were specially adapted for instruction to the school children and no provision was made for the adult portion of the community.

About 1900 a library was purchased by private subscription and placed in the residence of Roswell S. Fox, and the use of the books was for the benefit of all who wished to read them. The existence of this library was of short duration as that same year the town appropriated $200 for the purpose of establishing a town library. The schoolhouse at the Center had become vacant, the school being removed to a larger building, and the lower story had been arranged for town offices. The upper room was provided with shelves and cases, and books purchased. The Massachusetts Free Library Committee furnished 120 volumes and a large number of books were presented by individuals.

Library stations have been established at Collinsville, the Navy Yard village, Kenwood and East Dracut, where card catalogues are placed and the books conveyed which permits the distribution of the books in all parts of the town. A small room, formerly a cloak room, is used for a meeting place for the trustees and a reference room. On its shelves are placed encyclopedias, genealogical records, vital records of the towns in this state and books of reference and general information which may be consulted at the library, but are not for general distribution. A former recitation room, being vacant, has been arranged with cabinets in which are placed articles which are usually found in museums. In addition to articles of curiosity, a collection of old household utensils, farming tools, military equipment, stuffed birds and animals and geological specimens has been made.

The control of the library is in the hands of a board of trustees numbering six members who represent the different

parts of the town. The officers elected each year are a chairman and secretary who must be a member of the board. The trustees employ a librarian and assistant who cannot legally be members of the board. The call for gifts of books met with a hearty response, also gifts of curiosities for the museum. The town has, for several years, appropriated $1,000 for its support, which enables the trustees to purchase the latest books. The trustees have been instrumental in completing work which would be beneficial to the town. They secured the printing of the vital records of the town previous to 1850, which may be found in the state libraries of every state in the United States, also in every town and college library in Massachusetts. A fund known as the Eddy fund, to which the state makes an annual appropriation of money, enables the towns to publish these records with the expenditure of a small sum of money.



GEORGE W. COBURN

(See Page 378)

CHAPTER XIV.

ROADS, FERRIES AND BRIDGES

THE first settlers north of the river needed few highways. In this vicinity they lived near the north side of the river, consequently one or possibly two roads leading to the place of crossing were all that were needed. As the number of their cattle increased it created a demand for hay for winter use, and as English hay had not been introduced their dependence was upon the meadows for their supply. The low land about the first settlement was not sufficient to produce hay enough, but on Double Brook, Beaver Brook and Long Pond there were swamps which, when cleared of bushes, furnished a sufficient quantity. Cart roads were made leading to these meadows which later were laid out and became the present highways.

Previous to the time when Webb disposed of his holdings, he requested the selectmen of Chelmsford to lay out a road from his house to Chelmsford common. The answer to his petition is recorded:

"Mr. John Web Desiring A high Way from his farme over meremack River Towards Chelmsford the Selectmen Considering thereof have appointed William fletcher and James parker to Laye Out the Same, And the aforesd William and James make thare Returns to the selectmen that they have Determined The aforesd way to Begin at meremack River where Mr. John Web made his Ware [weir] And so to be of a Seficant Bredth for Carting And to Run throw to the Comon Witness In the Name of the selectmen the 29th:7:1668. Sam'll Adams Recorder."

This appears to have been satisfactory to the families of the Coburns and Varnums for several years but in 1710 the owner of the land on the south side of the river attempted to close the road. The settlers in Dracut desiring only their rights petitioned the General Court as follows: "To the Honord Court of ye Generil sessions of the peace Holden by her

Majestyes Justices in & for ye County of Mddlx June ye 13 1710 at Concord. The petition of severil of the Inhabitants of the Plantations called Draucutt scituat upon the Northerly side of Mirrimack river Humbly sheweth. That where as your petitioners as also our predecessors of ye fore cited place have for now fourty yeares peacebly enjoyed the free use of away to travil & go to Chelmsford over merimack river at ye landing place against ye now dwelling house of Joseph Coleburn the wch way went from sd landing place cross ye farme wch did formerly belong to major Hinchman, the wch way as we apprehend is in the same place where it was layd out by order of the selectmen of Chelmsford and is more convenient upon severil accounts then any other place fer landing our boat both from winds and Ice in the season of ye year as also that place is more convenient to defend the Boat from ye Enemies if assaulted there being no other house fortyfied at ye river but sd Colburns there being nine or ten houses near thereto all which desire the way may be there being the principle part of sd plantation. But there is now one Jonathan Howard a cuccussor upon the sd farm of major Hinchman doth stop us in our passing in sd way by fencing us from going there when we did apprehend was our right to go. And therefore we your poor petitioners Humbly beg and desire of this Honored Court to consider our Condition and order something to be done to effect.

Daniell Coburn
Joseph Coburn
in the name of the rest"

The answer to the petition was favorable as a brief report of the court will show: "July ye 30 1710 The Court Considering the danger of laying sd way any where else Especially in time of War Order that the sd way be Continued and used as it is now Till this Court Shall See Cause to alter the same and sd Dracut men to pay costs."

The Howard farm mentioned in the petition afterward came into possession of Dr. J. C. Ayer. An old path still leads under the railroad bridge to the river and a ferry existed later at this place. The second record to be found is in the files of the Middlesex County Court of General Sessions and is endorsed,

"A Copy of the Highways in Dracut." And again in a later handwriting, "Coppy of Laying out Roads in the Town of Dracutt."

The copy was made by Ephraim Hildreth, who became town clerk in 1713, and appears to embody the records of two of his predecessors, Daniel Colburn, clerk in 1710, and John Varnum, clerk in 1711-12. The record gives the historian very little information as the locations of points given are forgotten and some of these projected roads may never have had an existence, but as a literary curiosity, showing the spelling, lack of punctuation marks and the abscence of the rules governing the use of capital letters which were not made until a century and a quarter later, it is given in full.

"The Committey that was chose Began at the Eastly and [easterly end] at the hill coled flage mado hill then they begon To lay out ways and so went over the brook and by marymack Reuer untel they Came all a Long By marcked Trees—then Returned Back a gain to a Dam Coled John Varnums Dam By marymack Reuer—then Begon a gain over this Dam or very near it and so went along to the East side of a hill that is near Petockit mado over a lettel plain and so between two hills to Beuer Brook fals—then a lettel father and then By the Log fence untell wie came to Sardint [Sergeant] Hildreths house—then wee Returned a gain to the top of the hill Near the Brook that runs into the field—then we went towards Mr. wentrops farm and so laid the way the Lots men untell we came to a Brook near meremack all along by and with marcked trees—and allso we Began the Way at Dunstable line a Bout a pine tree By the path so run thru the Varnums land over Carletts [Scarlets] Brook and through the Colburns here and by two Round ponds and a lon Down the hill to John Colburns hous as is marcked and Bounded and so Runs two Rod and a half wide By the Houses Deches and By a dech Coled Sethell Dech tel thay came to a Brook in Joseph Colburns Land that Runs into Sechels meado and Cros a lot of his land till it coms to Run between Daniel Colburn and Samawell Colburn and so to Run on till it Coms to Varnums fence a long by Joseph Varnums orchard and along thru the varnums land By

flag a mado hillside on his south side—to Disstinglesh the hige way that coms from merymack Reuer by the Lotmens at a destance By Ephraim Hildreth hous by the East side of the hill by petocket mado through the varnums thrugh the Colburns Land Near there houses through huts to Dunstable line—allso a way Laid out for Ephraim Hildreth through Mr. belsher or how so euer it is to his twelve acars of meado—and allso a way Laid out to the meado which goes by the Name of the Grat or furder meados by the Colburns and Varnums meado we begon this Way at the Contry Rode By the ministrers thirty acars Lot and so runs on the olde way to wegwom Bredg to Beauer Broock Brege and there Runs on the west side of meado once coaled allcokes and so Runs on to the olde way a gainst the plain that Is beyond Doble Berege and Keeps on the olde way over the meado Brock and to the New meado—we laid out the old way that hath Ben improved all by marcked trees Dracuett in the year 1711 over the Brock Caled Clay pet Brock which Comes out of the Sprouce Swampt on the East side of it there we begon and laid out a way frum the hige way that Runs By the Dech and a long Near the Brock alettel space off untell it Come a gain the old fordway and so Runs on a lettel hill and By the End of the Long Pond mado—and allso a nother way weay laid out for the propehietrs. On the same place that is from the Country Rode a long the old way to Barmado [Bear meadow] then to sprouce Swampt mado and Consearing the Spang that is Eaza Colburn Junior that Runs out of the New mados a way laid out fer footmen and horsmen to Goo ouer and fer Carts on the Norwesterly End at a Narro place Daniel Colburn town Clark—the Country Rode from the meting house as to the Gompos Lots ear marckt—a corb way Beginning at Joseph Colburns hous a long by the Reuer to Thomas Varnums land to the Bank of the Dech So Roning northerly Crosing Brocke so roning Northeast of the North side of the orchard One Rod and a half wide from thence in a open Rode to Doble Brock mado as trees ear marcked—also a Rode from the hieway that Runes to Dunstable By John Colburns hous a long by the Dech on the North side of it to the Wastward corner of it as it is Bounded—the way that Begings at John varnums Dam that is by the Reuer and so Rones down

to Beuear Brock By petockit foles Is a corbway and Not a open Rode—also a Rode that Begins a hieway at Beuer foles Runing Norwest to the old mado way a Bout two Rod and a half wide. Allso a Rode Beginning at the Rode that goes to the Colburns Newmeados so Runing northward near the Varnums and Colburns old mado Crossing a Brock Between two letel hills as tis marcked By trees so Running By marcked trees to the farm that was Richard Collecockts on Goldings Brook that Runing Eastwardly thru the farm that was Negros [Negus']—allso the Rode that gose to the old mados which Is the Colburns and varnums Is to go to euery lot allso there is full liberty and preulig to sled hay ouer the olde meados In winter time from Golding meados Collecots Retten with Derection with two of the Committy that Layd out the Rods and ways that ear here named Dracut april the third in the year 1711

JOHN VARNUM town Cl

Witness
Danil Colburn
Joseph Varnum
Etast
Ephraim Hildreth Town Clerk."

As many of these locations are unknown except to a few who have made a study of them, a reference to them will assist the reader in placing them; possibly there will be the same information in other chapters. Flag Meadow Hill is the well-known site of the Lowell General Hospital and the meadow lies on the northeast side. John Varnum's dam was at the narrow place in the river at the foot of the rapids, near the textile school. The road from the dam to Beaver brook falls must have been Riverside street. But a road appears to have been laid out nearer the river towards the mouth of Beaver brook. In the report of a committee on fishing rights on the river, made in 1817, they quote from a town record, now missing, that "a road was laid out by the town committy from Flag Meadow Hill to the mouth of Beaver Brook." Also from the present town records that the town "made an agreement with Joseph Varnum and Joseph Varnum Jr. to discontinue

the said road from the lower hole so called to the mouth of Beaver Brook."

Sergeant Ephraim Hildreth is supposed to have lived near the residence of his great grandson, Dr. Israel Hildreth, near the Hildreth cemetery, and the road from his house to the falls would be Hildreth and Pleasant Streets. "Then we returned to the top of the hill" that is to Hovey Square, and the "way to Mr. Winthrops' would be by way of Pleasant and Arlington streets, as at present. The road from Dunstable line across Scarlet's brook and through the Colburn property would appear to be what is now Varnum avenue, the brook in Joseph Colburn's land being Clay Pit brook. Pawtucket meadow was near the junction of Beaver brook with the river. The way for Mr. Hildreth to get to his meadow was very likely the present right-of-way leading from Greenmont avenue to the rifle range. The way from the minister's lot to the Great meadows was apparently what was called the Old Meadow road leading over the bridge, which crosses the brook above the site of the paper mill and which was then called Wigwam bridge.

Alcock's meadows were on the brook north of Lakeview avenue where the pumping station is located. "Doble Bridge" is not identified, but was possibly across Beaver brook, near Double brook. The way to Double brook meadow and Long Pond meadow was Totman road and Nashua road. "Gompos lots" laid on the west side of Beaver brook in Pelham, but the road to them is difficult to identify, although a portion of it would appear to be Mammoth road at Double Brook meadow. The road from Beaver falls, northwest to the Old Meadow road, must have been Hampson street. "Corb" is an obsolete form of curb and a corbway was a road probably over a swampy place, or the edge of a bank protected at the sides by a curbing of stone or logs to prevent teams from leaving the road. Bear Meadow lies northerly of Varnum avenue and is now crossed by the present line between Lowell and Tyngsboro and is southwest of Huckleberry hill. "Consearing the spang" is difficult to explain although a spang was a point of meadow projecting into the upland. Golding's brook is an outlet of Corbett's pond in Windham and enters Beaver brook about a quarter of a mile northeast of Pelham Center. The "farme that

was Richard Collecockte's'' laid in the angle at the junction of the two brooks just mentioned.

The duties of the committee which had been appointed to select locations for the roads ceased with the year 1710, as at this time another committee which had divided the territory into lots were authorized to lay out highways, a duty for which they were qualified on account of their knowledge of the location of the lots. In 1721 the committee laid out a road to Haverhill, this last named town adjoining Dracut on the east. The general direction is easy to determine, and a part of the road is in existence after a lapse of nearly two centuries. They report as follows:

''march the 25 1721

a highway Laid out in Dracut in middlesex in new england in the reserved Land at a place called Prims Lott and Highinsons Land two or three Rod wide as it is here platted out with heaps of stones and trees blassed with 2 blasses next the highway beginning westerly at Winthrops farm with heaps of rocks running easterly over Rocky Land then turning partly northeasterly with trees marked down a hill of a plain then running partly easterly on the north side of the little pond hole so continuing easterly to the mine pit hill on the north side of another pond hole also on the north side of the mine pit hill on the north side of another pond with a little crooke also on the north side of the mine pit then running northeasterly on the south side of a spruce bog in Higginsons Land then turning partly easterly to the east line of Dracutt Town this is a country Road from Dracutt to Haverhill Laid out and plotted and recorded by a Committy for said worke

Ezekiel Cheever
Joseph Varnum
James Fales''

In 1711, as before mentioned, the committee had laid out a road to Winthrop Farm and partly across it to the brook near the former residence of Dana Richardson, below Kenwood schoolhouse. It is probable that the new road connected with

this one, constituting the present travelled highway as far east as the cross road on which the Varnum burying ground is located. From this cross road to the George W. Coburn place, the road is of more recent date of location. The road to Haverhill, above mentioned, turned to the north between the Varnum houses and continued about 40 rods nearly to the brook in the hollow, then turned in an easterly and northeasterly direction to the north side of the Mine Pit hill. The present road to the nickel mine starts from the present highway about a quarter of a mile east of the cross road on which the Varnum cemetery is located and reaches the old road before coming to the mine pit. It continues onward over the top of a ridge which forms one of the glacial eskers which have already been described, then running northeasterly it reaches a cross road which runs parallel with the last mentioned, terminating at the farm formerly owned by Otis Whittier. At the present time it is seldom travelled, but it is within the recollection of people now living when it formed a means of communication between Dracut and Haverhill, now Methuen.

With the record there exists a very primitive drawing consisting of two rows of dots to represent the road with two small circles to give the location of the pond holes and which also shows the location of the mine pit. December 22, 1795, the town voted to "throw up the town way that leads from a black oak tree standin about 40 rods northerly of Col. Joseph Bradley Varnum's house and from thence eastwardly toward Benjamin Varnums house as far as to a white oak tree at a pair of bars sixty nine rods west of sd Benjamin Varnums house and accept in the room thereof a way laid out by Colonel Joseph B. Varnums house and through his land to Benjamin Varnums land to the road and bound above mentioned." All traces of this road which was discontinued are obliterated, but at the place between the Varnum Cemetery and the brook where the black oak tree stood, there is now a pair of bars while the end of the road where the white oak stood is near the farm formerly owned by the late George W. Coburn. A measurement of sixty-nine rods west of the Coburn house above mentioned terminates at a pair of bars where is now a farm road which was probably the end of the discontinued highway.

Another road is described as follows:

"March 25 1721 * * * beginning near the Colburns old meado Brook northerly of the spruce swamp which belongs to them so running northerly by trees marked then running more easterly to miry brook called Tonys brook then running southeasterly to Smiths meado which is Caleb Modys meado bounded with trees marked and heaps of rocks on rocks northeasterly crossing Island tree pond brooke near the south side of Gouldings farm where the upland almost meets then running northeasterly on the southern end and eastward side of Spruce swamp to the Lotts upon Goldings brooke as far as the ledge of rocks and to the several lotts upon the Distracted meadows also a highway running northerly out of the above said highway to Joseph Varnums meadow upon Collicutts farm laid out plotted and recorded by us Commity for said worke.

EZEKIEL CHEEVER
JOSEPH VARNUM
JAMES FALES."

In addition to the record there is an old plan at the top of which Beaver and Gouldings brooks are shown with seven lines to indicate small brooks and "slows," as they are called, running north into the larger brooks. The first is the New and Old Meadow brook, which is the Capt. Gilbert Coburn saw mill brook which crosses the County road north of the state line. The second is Tony's brook which enters Beaver brook a little west of the County road below the stone bridge. The third is Island tree pond brook. This is now called Gage's brook, but formerly Island Pond brook, and in this plan and other places the word tree is found for which no explanation can be given. At the place where the highway crosses this brook, "the place where the upland meets," exactly describes this crossing at the present time and it is noticeable that the old highways followed the high land thus avoiding swamps and meadows.

Fourth, "the Brooke running westerly out of the Distracted meadows into Goldings brooke." These meadows are north of Gage Hill, lying in Pelham and Windham, and the brook runs into Simpson's pond, then called Ledge of Rocks pond. The spruce swamp first mentioned is north of Coburn's New Meadow

brook and the Old Meadows and is crossed by the County road about half a mile north of the State line. The second spruce swamp lies north of Gage Hill road. This describes the road as beginning at the former Lyon farm on Sawmill or New Meadow brook and forms the present County road to Pelham Center until it reaches the Oscar Carlton farm, when it turns sharply to the north and again to the east and continues on through the Atwood district to Gage Hill. It appears to have been an extension and relocation of a road laid out in 1711 to the Caldicot and Negus grants. The road leading from this highway to "Joseph Varnums meadow" exists only as a right of way above the Atwood farms which is used by farmers to reach the Goulding Brook meadows.

The ledge on the road above the first mentioned spruce swamp is referred to in Morrison's "History of Windham." A family by the name of McAdams recently arrived from Scotland, while on their way to Londonderry, arrived at this ledge on Saturday night. In accordance with their principles to do no labor or travelling on the Sabbath, they rested here over the day and held religious services in the shelter of the ledge. This must have occurred about 1740 and their route was probably by this same road over Gage hill to the settlements near Corbett's Pond. March 25, 1721, a highway was laid out for the owners of the Gumpus lots to enable them to reach their meadows and to give access to the meadows north of Gage Hill from the west of Dracut. It ran easterly from the Gumpus lots nearly to Beaver brook, then the record shows that it turned northerly upon a pine plain to a convenient place to make a bridge over Beaver brook and then ran "on the north side of Collicuts and Golding farm to the meadow on Goldings brook." This describes the present road from Gumpus district to Pelham Center and northward towards Windham.

In recording the laying out of the road to Cedar pond, the whole record will be given: "March 25, 1721, A highway laid out esterly of Belshers Farm then running easterly to Seader pond Meadowes on ye north side of ye two Hundred acres Layed out for account of ye river Lootes, so running easterly on ye south sid of Antonnes Land and joseph Varnums Land below rigge hill turning through Inggoles Land then turning

north easterle to Seader Pond Meadows'' This was what is known as the Proprietors road. It is discontinued but used as a right of way to reach land not lying on any highway. It is south of and running parallel with Marsh Hill road and is north of the Dracut reservoir. A part of this road forms the road from Marsh Hill to east Dracut. ''also anouther road Layed out westerly of cheevers and curtises Land so running north easterly by William Colbons house Loot to Seader Pond Meadows road.''

The road leading past Curtis' land and William Coburn's house lot appears to have been what is now a part of Broadway, but as it was relocated in 1736 it cannot be definitely located. But as the Curtis' house was later owned by James Fox, now the residence of Moses A. Daigle, and the William Coburn house lot was in the vicinity of the J. W. Thissell, now George R. Fox farm, the road must have been near the present one.

March 25, 1721, ''A road laid out in the reserved lands lying at the north side of Colburns New Meadows running easterly then northerly upon the upland on the west side of Ingalls meadow to the lots that lye northward of the Colburns new meadows and so running across the southward of the lots to Cedar Pond road.'' Colburn's New Meadows were north of Marsh Hill and were south of the lots, so that this must have been the present road north of the State line and running parallel with Marsh Hill road. It evidently did not reach the last named road on Burns' Hill as at present, but connected with the old Cedar Pond road, near the farm formerly owned by Franklin C. Wilson. An old road runs through the woods from the Reuben Richardson farm to this point which was discontinued to be succeeded by the present one to Burns' Hill.

Rigge Hill was probably an esker in this vicinity. The way running north from Fox avenue to connect with the Cedar Pond road was not the present road which now passes the Dracut reservoir but a road parallel with the present one and lying on the west of the Worcester, now D. S. Fox farm. As already recorded, Belcher owned the tract west of the farm just mentioned. In 1736, he sold a parcel of this land to Hugh Jones of Wilmington. It was bounded on the east by a line

220 rods in length lying on a road. This would extend from Fox avenue near the house of Albert N. Fox to a point near the house of Eugene C. Fox where it must have connected with the Cedar Pond road. No trace of this road exists.

In 1756 the town voted "to accept of the town way on the east side of the land of John Taylor his homestead," which was later the Worcester or D. S. Fox farm, for the high way that was laid out on the west side of Taylors land, provided, "that the said Taylor will give a sufficient security to the widow Rebekah Hildreth and her heirs to pass and repass to her meadow." Thus the road laid out in 1736 was discontinued and the present one located which was the highway to Lowell until the present County road was laid out. In 1788 this old road was laid out to reach the new Marsh Hill road nearly opposite the David Fox, now Clinton W. Fox house.

Totman Road

The old house known as the Blood or Durkee house between Varnum avenue and the river stands on an old highway which, leading to Webbs Ferry, afterward owned by Edward Coburn, must be considered the second oldest road in the town. In 1668, the date of Webb's petition recorded in this chapter, the country lying north of this section was a wilderness, but soon the grants about the northern part of the present territory of the town were settled and Pelham and Londonderry were incorporated. All communication with the towns on the south side of the river was by way of this ferry and Totman road was the most direct way by which these settlers could reach Boston. Little is known of the settlement of families on this road and the land bordering on the highway does not appear to have been cultivated in earlier years to any extent except in the vicinity of Varnum avenue until it reaches the Nashua road. It was called Zeel road, as the home of Barzillai Lew was located there. It thus became the great highway for the towns north of Dracut and continued so until the laying out of the Mammoth Road.

The Indians who lived at Pawtucket Falls doubtless followed this course to Long Pond and the settlers later found it convenient to use this same Indian trail which was in time the highway or, as Richard Hazen in his diary calls it, the "path."

The Jonas Varnum house, now owned by Mr. Cameron, was built when the old road leading from the present Nashua road to the Mammoth road was the travelled road, as the front of the house indicates, but the locating of the Mammoth road left it on an unused road. Over this old road and through Totman road the soldiers hurried to the rendevous at the Lexington alarm, at the Durkee house, then belonging to Abraham Blood, and the level fields about the old house was the training ground. The Osgood house near Charles H. Cutter's, and owned by him and the Capt. Peter Coburn house, still standing north of Collinsville, were on old roads which later became parts of the Mammoth road. The occupants of the Osgood house would reach Clark's ferry by way of the old Meadow road, while Capt. Coburn would travel over Totman road to Webbs', afterward Coburn's ferry. The Solomon Abbott house north of Joseph Varnum's, formerly Nat. Varnum's, would stand on the Indian trail leading to Long Pond.

The Old Meadow Road

The first settlers were able to obtain only a limited quantity of hay in the vicinity of the river. They depended entirely on meadow hay, as the raising of hay on the uplands was unknown for several years. They located meadows and swamps north on New Boston village on Beaver brook, and proceeded to prepare a cartpath for the transportation of the hay to their barns. This was the first road to be used as a highway in the town and commenced on Varnum avenue running north and turning to the east crossing what is now Mammoth road, near the end of the electric car line, it reaches Hampson street and again turning north it crossed Beaver brook, near Meadow bridge. This was the fordway and the road continued practically as at present to the meadows above mentioned. As swampy or boggy land was difficult to cross, long detours were made, which accounts for the present crooked road.

Ferry Lane

From the first establishment of a ferry near Central bridge a way of access across the river from the Center would be required. This way existed at a very early date and was known

as Ferry Lane. It led from the Center through what is now known as Aiken avenue to the Hildreth Cemetery where it connected with the road from Hovey Square and thence through Hildreth street to near the house formerly owned by Warner Coburn. From this point it ran southwesterly to the river and probably on the river bank to the ferry. That portion of the way between West Sixth street and Lakeview Avenue is still in existence and forms a passageway between the two streets. It lies at the south end of what is called Bunker Hill. The water main from the pumping station which crosses the bed of the river is laid through this lane. There was no public way from the Navy Yard village to connect with this lane until after a century or more had alapsed, although private ways might have existed. As late as 1851, when a part of Centralville was annexed to Lowell and monuments were erected on the line that part of Hildreth street was called Ferry Lane. What is now Aiken avenue from the stone house easterly to the Center was laid out and accepted by the town in 1794.

The present Hildreth street was laid out in 1735 "from the end of Left. Colburn's stone wall by Left [Josiah] Richardson's house to Hunts ferry whence we turned down the river to a Stake and stones just below the lowest landing place commonly used. Thence turning back up the River in said Richardsons land to the side of Wilcassons Brook." An agreement was made with Lieut. John Colburn by which he would claim no damages from the laying out of the road. Until very recent years there was an open brook from Hildreth street near Coburn street to Merrimack river, its outlet being above Central bridge a short distance. Reference is made to this brook in the chapter on "Early Grants."

It soon became necessary to lay out another highway to accommodate the settlers in the eastern part of the town. "Jan. 6, 1748. A way laid out from the town way that leads from Robert Hildreths Ferry to Ephraim Halls house. Beginning by the said town way 2 rods north from Robert Hildreths Northwest corner of his homestead eastward through Stephen Woods land to John Barrons land near the house he purchased of Joseph Chamberlain, then eastwardly to the east corner of Ephraim Richardsons house, then eastward to the town way

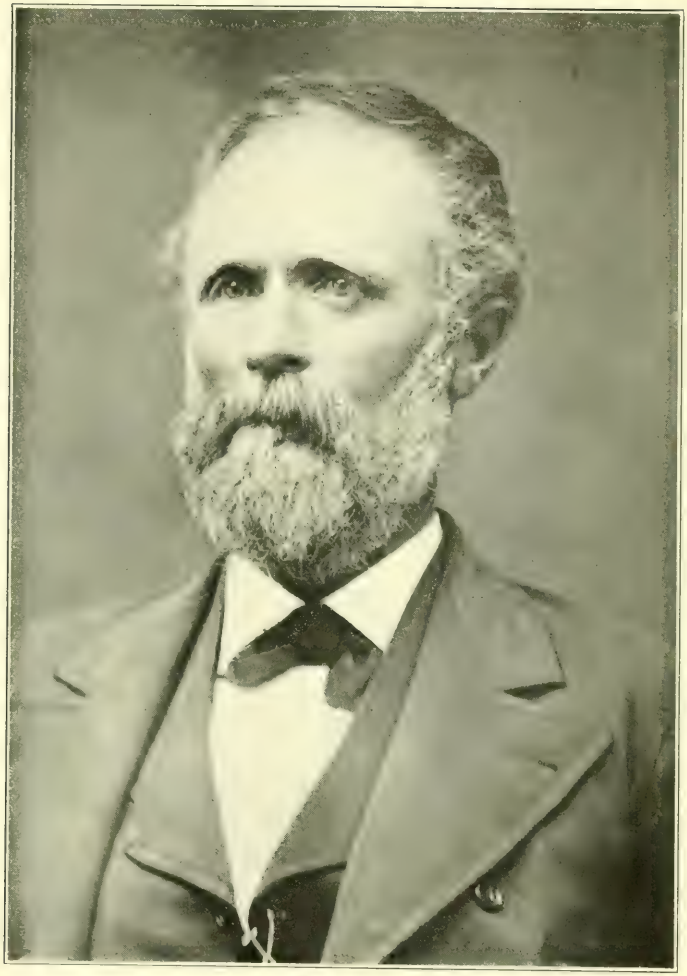
by Ephraim Halls house to the way that is cleared up nearby." This is the present Tenth street and old Methuen road over the hill. The Ephraim Richardson house was later the residence of Jonathan Fox, now owned by his son, John C. Fox. Ephraim Hall lived on the western part of what was later the farm owned by the late George Kelley. In 1835, when the cities of Lowell and Lawrence were becoming thickly settled, better accommodations for communication between them were demanded. To accomplish this Methuen street was opened from Seventh street, and, skirting the base of the higher part of the hill, it crossed Tenth street and formed the present highway to Lawrence. Coburn street was accepted as a public street this same year. In 1773, the town voted to lay out a road which is now the road through New Boston over Marsh Hill from Collinsville to East Dracut. As it is interesting to know who the owners of the land were at that time, a copy of the record is given:

"From Joseph Hambletts mill eastwardly up the hill towards Hambletts dwelling house then northerly through Jacob Colburns land to John Hambletts land and Joseph Hambletts, up the hill to Jonathan Colburns corner, through Timothy Colburns land and Jonathan Colburns land to his dwelling house, then easterly through the path now trod till it comes easterly to Jonathan Crosby Jrs house, then running on the southerly side of Jonathan Crosbys dwelling house through Crosbys land up the hill so easterly in the path now trod through Crosby and Caleb Barkers land till it comes out to the town way between said Caleb Barkers land and Robert Wrights house, then turning southerly up said way and thus out of said way into Mr. Jacob Barkers land on the northerly side of said Barkers orchard, then through Barkers running southeastwardly, then more eastwardly till it comes down to the meadow then across the meadow in the line between said Jacob and Caleb Barkers to Jacob Barkers land, then through Jacob Barkers land to David Fox's land then through Fox's land on the southerly side of Fox's orchard to land of Ephraim Coburn and others then through said land to John Bowers land, still easterly then running through Ephraim Curtis land so on to Miles Flint land and between Flint's house and barn

still running eastwardly through Flint's land and Hugh Jones land to Stephen Russells land to a Great Rock on the north side of said road, still running easterly on the southward side of said Russells House Fraim till it comes to George Burns land then up the hill through said Burns land eastward till we come to Thomas Taylors land. Then through Thomas Taylors land, Timothy Fryes and Benjamin Frenchs land to land of heirs of Joseph Chamberlain, through said heirs land to the path northeasterly in the said path to John Gilchreas and to the town way to Samuel Mansurs."

The present road over Primrose Hill, reaching the meadow road near the Edmund Coburn house, is as at first located. It is probable that it crossed the present road and continued east to the house formerly owned by John W. Peabody as this was the Jonathan Coburn place. The late Sewell Crosby informed the writer that a house once stood on this road, now a field, and he assisted in filling the cellar. Frequently when plowing this field stones were turned out which were worn by wagon wheels. Consequently the road now running by Rockwood D. Coburn's house must have been laid out more recently and the old road across the field discontinued. The old Crosby house was torn down about 1860 and stood near the present one. It was built in the old one-story style and stood there until the present one was erected. Robert Wright's house stood near the corner where this road reaches Colburn avenue. David Fox's farm was later the Darius L. Fox farm, Miles Flint's house was on or near the Peabody farm and Stephen Russell's land was later the Hall farm, now owned by Bert A. Cluff. The John Gilchrist house was east of Burns' Hill and on the westerly side of the cross road leading to Pelham.

On account of the war of the Revolution, work on the road was suspended and it appears to have been finished in sections. In 1808, that section from the Fox Farm on Marsh Hill to Colburn avenue was completed. In 1737 a road was laid out from "Abraham Varnums to Nottingham line." This is the present Nashua road from Justus Richardson's to Hudson, then called Nottingham West. Many of the older houses were erected before these highways were constructed. The Jonas Varnum



HENRY VARNUM

(See Page 422)

house near Double brook, later the Cameron farm and the Capt. Peter Coburn house both now on the Mammoth road were old houses many years before the present highway existed. An old highway leads from the Cameron farm to the Nashua road by which Webb's or Coburn's Ferry at Pawtucket falls could be reached, while a road near the old Osgood house led to Clark's or Varnum's Ferry. Until recently cellars could be seen near Long Pond far from any highway, but there are indications that a path led to the Robert Mills or Joseph Varnum houses and this could be used by the occupants of the Capt. Peter Coburn house. "Clough City," in the northeastern part of the town, is on a short road leading from the highway to North Pond. From the end of this road, a path, said to have once been a town road, leads to the east side of Island Pond past the May place, on which one May lived about 1830, and so northeasterly to Gage Hill, a distance of over a mile.

The New County Road.

This was laid out about 1828 and led from the New Hampshire towns to Central Bridge which had recently been built. Some sections of this road had been for many years a part of the old stage road and, connected by new sections, formed the new County road which is an extension of Bridge street. The section from above the swamp, north of the Pelham line, southerly to Greenmont avenue, was new. From this point to Pleasant street an old road had existed which is mentioned in a deed covering the site of the Dracut Centre Church building and dates back at least to 1786. From Pleasant street to the point where Hildreth and Bridge streets meet the street is new, while from this point to central bridge it was the old Bradley Ferry road. In 1847, Willard street from "Dry Bridge hill" on Bridge street to Broadway, leading through the town farm was laid out and that part of Broadway from Willard street to Moses Daigle's house was also opened probably about this time. The town farm buildings were, previous to 1847, in a field at the end of Poor Farm Lane, now Arlington avenue, and access to Bradley's Ferry was, until this time, by way of a farm road to the northerly end of Tenth street. In 1827 the road from the Navy Yard to Bradley's Ferry, now Lakeview avenue, was only a footpath, and

as late as 1837 Sladen street was only a cart path through the woods. In 1841 a petition was presented for the opening of a road from the Navy Yard village to Central Bridge.

Several routes were projected and opposed, and finally Sladen street from Pleasant street to Center street (Now Lakeview avenue) was laid out. The first proposition was to open a street from Simeon Flint's store to Center street. This would extend from Brookside street near the bridge at the mill and reach to Aiken avenue. The town accepted the street and awarded damages but as it would accommodate only a small number, it was decided to change the location. Two years later, a second one was surveyed, accepted and damages awarded. This was where the present street now passes the car barns and it was to be extended north to reach the road to Ames Mills, now Lakeview avenue, above the Navy Yard. This was also unsatisfactory and the location again changed to the present one, now Sladen street and Lakeview avenue.

At a town meeting held December 22, 1746, the town voted to choose a committee to present a petition to the General Court, requesting them to confirm "all the ways or roads to the town that was laid out by any Committee in said town and not laid out by the selectmen of the town." At the same meeting a protest was entered by Joseph, Abraham, Samuel, Joseph, Jr., Thomas and John Varnum. The reasons for the protest were in substance: First, no particular roads or time of location were specified. Second, it is not consistent with the honor and dignity of the General Court to interfere in such trifling matters. Third, it is an injustice to the General Court to act upon things blindfold, uncertain and unintelligible. Fourth, the manner of calling the meeting was erroneous. It was called to meet on the 22d of December, at 9 o'clock. It does not state whether the forenoon or evening is intended and consequently voters might be prevented from attending. The protest was evidently heeded as no further action by the town is on record.

In 1747, the town voted "to accept of a highway four rods wide all along by Merrimack river from the upper end of Pawtucket upper falls to the lower part of Pawtucket lower falls at a place called the lower hole to a stone wall and from thence 2 rods wide to the town way that leads from Col. Joseph

Varnums house to the meeting house.'' The same persons who had signed the first protest appeared and intimating that the action of the town was for promoting the welfare of the few at the expense of many entered a protest giving as reasons: First, the road, if laid out, did not lead to any particular place, and the land was not town property. Second, it was impracticable to make the way passable. Third, it was not a convenience or necessity, but is prejudicial to the private interests of particular persons. Fourth, it would be of great cost and damage to the town. Fifth, it had not been requested by any inhabitants of the town or presentation of a petition. As there are no traces of a road by the river below the Textile School and by the falls we must infer that the town heeded the protest and abandoned the project.

A difference in the manner of locating highways in the early days and the present system is noticeable. Swamps and hills were avoided and longer distances considered preferable as the knowledge of road building was meagre. Yet in some cases the road would be carried over almost impassable hills to accommodate someone desiring a residence on elevated land and teams for many years would travel over these hills until new ones with less grade were constructed. The County in the early part of the last century, established the principal highways, but repairs were made by the town. Under the present system the State and County appropriate money to assist the towns in building new roads or repairing those already in use. The building of Pawtucket bridge in 1792 and Central bridge in 1825 caused a marked change in the location of the highways. Until this time all roads led to the ferries, but new crossings of the river by means of these bridges, demanded new highways.

In 1792, the Mammoth road as a continuous highway did not exist, but portions of it called paths were used by the earlier settlers. The construction of a direct route to the new bridge included many of those old paths which were connected by new ones, which together formed the wide highway from the towns north of Dracut and so leading to Boston, which was the market town for the farmers. The travel over Totman road to the ferry was diverted to the new road and the path near Long Pond was discontinued.

Ferries

The river was a natural barrier which, for many years, hindered the settlement of the land on the north side of the river. But as farms were laid out and occupied, ferries came into existence. For a period of 114 years the only way to cross the river was on the ice in the winter season or by ferry boats, when the river was open.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact date when the first ferry was established, but occasionally they are mentioned in old deeds. At the opening of this chapter reference is made to a road laid out by the Selectmen of Chelmsford for the accommodation of John Webb. It reached the south side of the river in Middlesex village opposite Webb's house. Naturally when the settlers on the north of the river had become so numerous as to need an established ferry, it would be located at this spot where the Durkee, or Old Ferry Road, as it was called, reached the river. This was on the land belonging to Edward Colburn, the first permanent settler who had purchased this part of the Webb land, and would be used principally by the families of Colburn and Varnum. Later, but at a date not ascertained, Capt. Jonas Clark of Chelmsford had a ferry lower down the river, at a point near the head of the old Middlesex Canal, and just west of the railroad station at Middlesex village. On the Dracut side the landing must have been near the foot of Bedford street. Capt. Clark owned what is now called the Middlesex tavern. In 1759, he gave a deed of his farm to his son Timothy, one of the bounds being "at the Ferry way called Clark's Ferry now in possession of said Jonas and Timothy." It was a chain ferry and wheeled vehicles and cattle could be carried across. As the boat was too heavy to be propelled by oars, a heavy chain was fastened to the bank on each side of the river and passed over a wheel at the side of the boat. Grasping the chain and pulling it caused the boat to move slowly across. When the ferry was discontinued the chain was never removed and now lies in the bed of the river.

The earliest mention of a ferry at the location of Central bridge is found in a deed of conveyance of 100 acres from John Colburn to Robert Hildreth, dated January 3, 1735. The land laid wholly on the east side of Bridge street from the river

to Tenth street and one of the bounds was "a black oak at the Ferry." In November of the same year a highway was laid out from "Lieut. Richardsons house to Mr. Hunts ferry." This was Jeremiah Hunt of Billerica who had the privilege of operating a ferry across the Concord river and another across the Merrimack. The highway was practically what is now the lower end of Hildreth and Bridge streets and has been previously described. The ferry was known for several years as Hildreth's ferry, but passed to the possession of John White who sold, in 1758, to Solomon Abbott of Andover the land and buildings with all rights to the ferry. In 1759, Abbott sold a part of the land and one-half of the ferry to Daniel Colby, and in 1761, he sold the remaining half with 57 acres of land, with buildings, to Amos Bradley of Haverhill, mentioning the property as purchased of Capt. John White. Seven years later Bradley purchased from Colby his half of the ferry with 30 acres of land and dwelling house, near the river. Bradley's purchase was long known as the Bradley farm, extending eastward from Bridge street to Beacon street and from the river to Tenth street. In 1827, Joseph Bradley, son of Amos, sold the ferry rights to the Central Bridge Corporation for $1,050. Nehemiah Bradley, a brother of Joseph, was ferryman, and travellers coming from the Chelmsford side would attract his attention by calling or blowing a horn.

On the Chelmsford side the landing was a little below Central bridge, where the factories of the Massachusetts Corporation now stand. The highway to Pawtucket bridge being the present Salem street and the Boston road is now Central street. The Dracut landing is still in existence and is located on First street, adjoining Varnum park, and until after 1874, a legal right-of-way existed on which stands the block at the corner of Bridge and First streets. Until that time the buildings were situated at a greater distance from the present sidewalk, and when the block was erected it was necessary to acquire these ferry rights. When the bridge was built, the ferry boat was sold to the town of Tyngsboro, where it was used for a conveyance across the river until the building of the Tyngsboro bridge, in 1872. It was then moored to the shore, but during a flood, the pressure of the water caused the chain to break and it floated down the river until reaching the falls, it broke in pieces on the rocks.

References in records of deeds are made to ferries of which no traces can be found and which probably refer to the transportation of individuals across the river, but not for vehicles. In the chapter on Reserved Lands, reference is made to Joseph Richardson, who purchased land on the river and who owned a ferry. This is supposed to have been located a short distance west of Amesbury street, Elsmere, but no further records of its location or existence can be found. In 1787 and again in 1791, there was a conveyance of property which was located near the corner of the Methuen road and Richardson's lane adjoining the farm of the late Nathan Thissell, on the west. The land conveyed is described as "on the road from Bradley's ferry to Richardson's ferry thus showing that a ferry existed on the river.

At Varnum's landing, now Belle Grove, a ferry was established by the Varnums at a date unknown. This was arranged for the carrying of carriages across the river and the road from the Varnum houses on Methuen road, leading to the ferry, is still in use. This was the place selected by Joseph B. Varnum as the site of a new bridge, providing his petition for the location of a turnpike had been favorably received to which reference will be made in this chapter. The cellar of the ferry house is still near Varnum's brook on the east side and a few rods from the river. General Simon Coburn, the grandfather of the late George B. Coburn, occupied the house and was the ferryman. No traces of the landing remain, but a right-of-way exists on the south side of the river on the Hood farm and the roadway on the north leading to the ferry may be seen crossed by the car tracks of the electric road.

Bridges.

For nearly a century and a half the only way of crossing the Merrimack river was by ferries. Bridges of logs, and fordways across Beaver brook, gave means of communication between the different parts of the town and allowed the farmers to reach their outlying meadows. But as the population of the town increased, better accommodations for crossing the river were demanded. February 1, 1792, a charter was granted to the Middlesex Merrimack River Bridge Corporation. The stock consisted of eighty shares and the first meeting was held at the house of Joel

Spalding. At this meeting, Colonel Loammi Baldwin was elected President, Parker Varnum, Clerk, and Colonel James Varnum, Treasurer. At that time the bridges in country towns were constructed of wood. November 5th, of the same year, the bridge was opened for travel and a toll-keeper appointed. The Mammoth road, which had been surveyed and some parts opened for travel, was now constructed and gave access from New Hampshire towns by a more direct way to Boston, the nearest market town. The names of the original Proprietors are:

Parker Varnum	Solomon Aiken
James Varnum	Samuel Cotton
Thomas Russell	William Hildreth Jr.
Bradley Varnum	Jeptha Spalding
Jonathan Varnum	Josiah Fletcher Jr.
Benjamin French	Peter Coburn, Jr.
Jonathan Simpson	Nathan Tyler
Louis de Marisquelle	Eliakim Wood
Joseph B. Varnum	Daniel Coburn
Loammi Baldwin	Moses B. Coburn
William Blanchard	Asa Richardson
Joel Spalding	Oliver Whiting Jr.
John Ford	Thomas Beals
Jonathan P. Pollard	Ebenezer Hall

Early in the year 1792, work was commenced on the new bridge, and November 5th of the same year, was the date appointed for the formal opening to the public. Colonel Loammi Baldwin was chosen as purchasing agent and instructed to purchase one ton of iron and two barrels of New England rum. The rum was exhausted before the iron was, as in two months later he was ordered to procure one barrel of rum and at the same time to purchase half barrel of W. I. Rum for the proprietors. No record can be found of the celebration exercises at the formal opening of the bridge, but at a meeting of the proprietors it was voted that every one who crossed the bridge that day should be treated to flip of toddy. The banks in Boston assisted by loans in the payment of bills. Major Hildreth was empowered to borrow from the banks the sum of $400, also to purchase one barrel of W. I. Rum and one quarter of a hundred of sugar. This

was probably to be used at a supper or banquet given in honor of the completion of the bridge, as an order was given to Col. Varnum to provide supper for sixty persons at the expense of the proprietors.

The supports of the bridge were of wood, and as they decayed the bridge became unsafe for travel, and in 1803 it was voted to erect stone piers and abutments, the treasurer to procure rum and sugar for the workmen. The removal of the supports revealed the roadway also in a state of decay and in 1804 the whole structure was rebuilt. In 1807, Major Parker Varnum succeeded Col. Baldwin as president, James Varnum was elected treasurer and Asahel Stearns, clerk. The success which attended the building of Pawtucket bridge, the convenience of crossing the river in this manner compared with the uncertainty and delay of ferries and the increased value of land which followed the erection of the bridge, led to the formation of plans for another one to be built at some point lower on the river. A petition was presented to the Legislature by Joseph B. Varnum and others for permission to build a bridge across the river at the Varnum farm, where a ferry was operated known as Varnum's ferry, to which reference has been made, at what is now Belle Grove. A bridge had been built at what is now Lawrence and was owned by the Andover and Medford Turnpike Corporation. The proprietors of Pawtucket bridge realized that the existence of another bridge would be the cause of the reduction of their income by tolls and appointed a committee consisting of Parker Varnum, John Ford and Asahel Stearns to confer with a committee from the Andover and Medford Company to oppose the petition. This petition also included the right to construct a turnpike from New Hampshire line to Woburn. The petition was granted but the bridge never constructed.

In 1808, the right to collect the tolls was sold for one year for $900 to Ebenezer Griffin, payment to be made weekly to the treasurer of the company. Five years later, in 1813, the incorporation of a new town was proposed. This was to include all that portion of Dracut west of a line drawn from the mouth of Beaver brook to the state line and all that part of Chelmsford which is now Lowell. In 1807, the bridge company had voted "to give free passage to all persons to any public meeting at the

West meeting house in Dracut,'' and this action was continued from year to year. Apparently to encourage the project of a new town, the company now voted ''to collect no tolls on Sundays or whenever public meetings were held at the meeting house,'' provided the new town was incorporated. But the opposition was too great and the project failed.

In 1823, Edward St. Loe Livermore, who lived where St. John's Hospital now stands, petitioned the Legislature for the right to erect a bridge at Hunt's falls. This was opposed by the Pawtucket Bridge Company and the petition refused. The maintenance of the bridge was very expensive, as the wooden supports decayed rapidly. In 1817, the part over the main channel was rebuilt, and in 1848, the whole structure was renewed, and in 1849, the original name was abolished and the name Pawtucket bridge was substituted. In 1860, the bridge was declared a public highway and purchased of the company for $12,000. Of this sum, Dracut paid $2,000, Lowell $4,000 and the County $6,000. With the erection of the factories there arose a demand for a bridge at Bradley's ferry; and on February 24, 1825, a company was incorporated consisting of Joseph Bradley, Benjamin F. Varnum, Ezekiel Cheever, Abijah Fox, Ezekiel Fox, Peter Hazelton and others. These were all Dracut residents. All rights in the Bradley ferry were purchased by them and work on the bridge commenced. The river at this point is wide and deep, even at low water. Instead of building coffer dams and laying the foundation on bed rock, cribs were constructed, filled with stone and gravel, and sunk, and upon these the piers were built. The cost of the bridge, was $21,000 and to furnish an income to pay expenses and to give the company a revenue, tolls were collected from those who crossed afoot, from those who crossed with wheeled vehicles and from drivers of cattle.

According to the Dracut records, the citizens of the town considered the amount charged for tolls excessive and brought suit against the Central Bridge Company. The directors of the company had purchased the Bradley farm and to encourage people to buy house lots, agreed to allow all persons living on the land, or going to the land on business for the owner, to cross the bridge without paying toll. This was probably one cause of the suit being brought. This was settled out of court, as on March 4, 1833,

it was voted, "That our representative suspend all further operations in General Court against the property of Central Bridge Company provided said proprietors will give them satisfactory assurance that said corporation will reduce these tolls to the town of Dracut as proposed by the agent of said Corporation, to wit: to one half of what said corporation now takes, in case of there being half cents these to go to the Corporation." March 26, 1833, the proprietors voted to comply with the demands of Dracut on account of great expense in keeping roads in repair leading to and from the bridge on condition that Dracut should stop the case against the corporation. Two days later the Legislature authorized the Central Bridge Corporation to reduce the tolls to correspond with those established at Pawtucket Bridge. April 1, 1833, the town voted to withdraw the suit, but the arrangements were for several years unsatisfactory, for in 1842 an article was inserted in the warrant, "To see what measures the town will take to reduce tolls on Central Bridge and to see if town will vote to petition the Legislature to send a committee invested with power to find amount of money the corporation has taken in tolls and by compounding themselves."

Dissatisfaction continued to exist between the Bridge Corporation and the Town of Dracut, for some years later a committee was appointed to prevent the City of Lowell from obtaining the rights of Dracut in Central bridge and this committee was authorized to demand their books and call for persons and papers or petition the Legislature to appoint a committee to call upon the corporation for persons or papers for the purpose of ascertaining the amount now due said corporation for said bridge. The difficulty was finally settled and the rights of Dracut protected.

In 1843, the collection of tolls for pedestrians was abolished. The land in the vicinity of the bridge was owned by the Bridge Corporation and to encourage its sale no toll was collected from those who resided on this land. The charge for crossing became burdensome and to avoid the payment of it the farmers would leave their teams on the Dracut side and walk across, causing a diminution of the receipts in the treasury. The toll house stood on what is now Varnum Park, near the old ferry landing, and a gate which was thrown across the street enabled the ferryman to detain the passengers until the toll was paid. When

built the bridge had no covering, but in 1849 sides and roof were added. During the later years of its existence teams were not allowed to cross it at a speed greater than a horse would walk. In 1855, the city of Lowell declared the bridge to be a public highway and awarded the corporation one dollar in payment for it. The company refused to accept the award and a suit was instituted against the city and the case was before the court seven years before a settlement could be effected. It resulted in a verdict for the plaintiff and the sum of $33,958.51 was awarded, the amount of Dracut's share being $7,865.

The annexation of Centralville to Lowell in 1852 and of Pawtucketville in 1874 relieved Dracut of further expense in the maintenance of these two bridges. As a bridge over which there is travel between towns and cities requires to be kept in repair and is used largely by surrounding towns, a part of the expense of repairs is borne by the County but in earlier years the towns were taxed directly for their proportional part. The bridge over the Concord at Billerica was on the main thoroughfare to Boston and before the introduction of steam roads was the principal place of crossing for the towns in this vicinity. It was built in 1699 and the taxpayers of the part of Chelmsford, now Dracut, contributed to the payment of the cost of building. The expense of maintaining a wooden bridge at this place was heavy, and while borne principally by Billerica the town received assistance from Groton, Westford, Chelmsford, Dunstable and Dracut. The people of Dracut objected to giving further assistance, and in 1737, the town was declared exempt from contributing more money. A record on the town books shows that on May 22, 1738, it was voted to pay John Varnum the sum of £6 "for his servis and Expenses In Gitting the Town free from Charg of Billirica Bridg."

There are three bridges across Beaver brook which have existed since about the time of the incorporation of the town. The falls at the Navy Yard and Collinsville to some extent decided the location, as saw and gristmills were erected at these places. Meadow bridge, above the paper mill, accommodated the farmers who wanted to reach their meadows and, though used as a fordway, a bridge was needed. No records are found of the building of the bridge at the Navy Yard village known

as Stanley's bridge, but in 1855 the present stone bridge replaced the former one of wood, the town appropriating $1,000 for this purpose.

At the annual meeting of the town held in February of this present year (1920), the sum of $5,000 was appropriated for the purpose of widening the bridge. The bridge, when built in 1855, was of sufficient width to accommodate the traffic, but as the mill was later enlarged and buildings erected for family use, there came a demand for the bridge to be widened to correspond with the width of the highway. Two years later the bridge at Collinsville was rebuilt also of stone. The funds for the purpose were received from the United States treasury. At this time all towns received from the Government a share of what was known as "surplus revenue." Meadow bridge was until 1909 a wooden structure, but in that year the town rebuilt it with cement at an expense of $500.

The only public iron bridge is at Parker avenue below the site of the paper mill, and was erected by Percy Parker, but is kept in repair at the expense of the town. The construction of the electric railroad between Lowell and Lawrence was the occasion of building new bridges across Richardson and Varnum brooks. In 1802, a petition was presented to the County Commissioners for a bridge, across the Merrimack at Deer Jump, but the town opposed it and the project was abandoned. Tyngsboro bridge now crosses the river between Lowell and Nashua, but no bridge between Lowell and Lawrence exists.

The Turnpike Between Boston and Canada

Reference has been made to a project to build a bridge which should cross the Merrimack near Varnum's Ferry. At this period there was no means of transportation on land known or contemplated which should supersede the ox teams and consequently the minds of the people were directed to the improvement of existing highways or the creation of new ones. All roads led to Boston and the produce from the farms of this state and New Hampshire was sent to that market; and very naturally the most direct routes were sought. The bridge at Lawrence and the one at Pawtucket falls were the only ones in existence and as neither one followed a direct course to Canada which

would be of benefit to the farmers and small manufacturing villages which had come into existence, a new route was surveyed which would start from Medford reaching Dracut by way of Varnum's falls. The proposed route may be found, approximately, by drawing a line from Medford and, as stated in the petition, passing through that part of Dracut known as Burns' Hill, continuing through Pelham, N. H., a short distance east of the Centre and crossing Goulding's brook it would follow the Merrimack River northerly towards its termination. A third of a century must elapse before steam roads were introduced and consequently the tolls received on the turnpike roads and the bridges were a factor in inducing their multiplication. The citizens of the towns lying on the route in this state were to a great extent heartily in favor of the enterprise and it was also favorably received in New Hampshire. A copy of the petition is here presented:

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives assembled humbly show your petitioners.

That the increasing population of this state, New Hampshire, Vermont and the British Province of Lower Canada renders it highly important that a road should be opened on the most direct and practicable route from Boston, the capital of this state, to the river St. Lawrence, passing by the east end of Missique bay: it would render the communication betwixt Boston and Canada easy, and reciprocally advantageous: it would facilitate the transportation of produce from the interior to Boston, and very much increase the mutual interest of town and country. A direct line from Medford meeting house to Concord, New Hampshire, is found by actual survey, to cross Merrimack river between Deerjump Falls and Varnums Falls about a quarter of a mile from each; upon a critical examination of the ground from Boston to New Hampshire line on and near the said route it is conceived the most practicable place to build a Bridge across Merrimack river is at Varnum Falls. That place is situated to favor laying the road on the best grounds of travel on or near the said route both in this state and New Hampshire. Your petitioners therefore request your Honors to pass an act of in-

corporation, and granting to such of us, and others, as may associate for that purpose, liberty to make a Turnpike Road from the country road a little east of the house of William Nicholls, late of Woburn, on the most direct and practicable ground, through the north part of Woburn, through Wilmington, Tewksbury and a small corner of Andover, to Varnums Falls in Merrimack river and from thence through Dracut to New Hampshire line, at land formerly owned by John Gilcreast or by George Burns deceased on the principles prescribed by the general act for regulating turnpike incorporations within this commonwealth, & to build a bridge across Merrimack river at Varnums Falls in the direction and for the accommodation of travellers on such Turnpike Road, as may be granted as aforesaid, under such regulations, and with the privilege of demanding and receiving such toll as may by your honors be judged just and equitable.

J. B. Varnum and others
Moses Whiting and others
Jacob Coggin and others''

In the Senate June 8th 1807. Ordered that the petitioners advertise their petition in the Independent Chronicle and Salem Register three weeks successively. Hon. Jonathan Maynard, Jonas Kendall, Walter McFarland, John Spurr, and Samuel Flagg a committee at petitioners' expense to look over the ground and make return at next session of the present general court. This committee instructed to meet Tuesday 7 July 1807 at house of Abijah Thompson, innholder, Woburn.

It is safe to conclude that this committee met as ordered and proceeded to the examination of the route and the feasibility of granting the petition, for it is recorded that ''The Committee of both houses to whom was referred the petition &c Report that the petitioners have leave to bring in a bill for the purpose prayed for''

But with all the advantages which would be derived from the establishment of the road, the business was not to proceed without opposition. The stockholders of the Pawtucket Bridge Company foresaw a diminution in their receipts for tolls, as a great part of travel would be diverted to the more direct route

and the farmers at the west part of the town would find the eastern part reaping advantages upon which they had built their hopes when the Mammoth road became the accepted highway. To oppose the granting of the petition a counter petition was presented. In this petition, a copy of which is inserted, it will be seen that the parties presenting it were too shrewd to intimate the real reason for opposing it, but place emphasis on the fact of the obstructions which would interfere with the rafting of logs and heavy timber. These were reasonable objections as, while the Pawtucket falls were avoided by a canal from the Merrimack to the Concord rivers, which is still in existence to convey water, there still remained the rapids of Hunt's and Varnum's falls which were below the canal.

COPY OF PETITION

"To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Memorial and Remonstrance of the subscribers humbly sheweth.

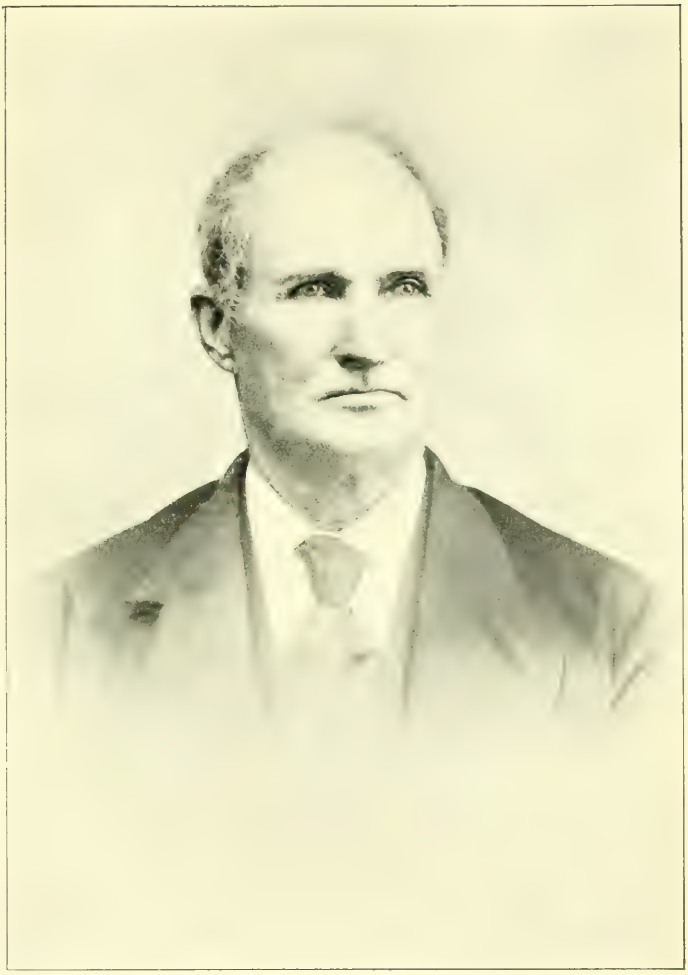
That your remonstrants contrary to their expectation, have been informed that a Committee of your honorable body have determined to report in favor of granting the prayer of the petitioners for a Bridge to cross Merrimac river at or near Varnums Falls between the town of Dracut and Andover. And as we are well acquainted with the said River and are much engaged in the rafting business we feel deeply interested in the free and unobstructed passage through.

We therefore beg leave to state to your honors, that the current of the said River for a considerable distance above the place proposed for the said bridge is very rapid so that it would be extremely difficult managing a heavy raft of wood or timber, so as to pass a bridge in that place without very great hazard and danger. And from the alteration of the current occasioned by the rise and fall of the said River it becomes necessary to vary the course of the rafting; so that if a bridge were to be erected with the abutments and piers so arranged as to make the passage most safe and convenient in high water, that would greatly obstruct the rafting in low water. While on the other hand if a Bridge were to be so constructed as to be the least im-

pediment in low water that construction would be equally injurious to the business in high water. In addition to which we beg leave to observe that Hunt's falls, which is a long and dangerous rapid is but a small distance above the place of the proposed Bridge, and that in passing that rapid in high water, our rafts are often so much shattered and injured as to become unmanageable; and as there is in high water no opportunity to stop and repair until we have passed Varnums fall we often experience great difficulty and danger in passing said falls in their present situation. And from a perfect knowledge of this business in which we are employed almost the whole of the rafting season, we can state with confidence that it is impossible so to construct a bridge in this place as not to greatly obstruct, if not entirely ruin, the rafting business on the said River which is at present difficult and hazardous as well as expensive. And from the difficulty we experience from the obstructions already erected on the said River we are of opinion that the building another at this place would be ruining the business of rafting wood and heavy lumber.

On the whole we beg leave to observe that we cannot think that the building of a bridge on this place would be so great a benefit to one class of citizens as to compensate for the injury it would occasion to another; nor can we believe that the public interest requires that the rafting business should be sacrificed to the small public accommodation which would arise to a few from granting the prayer of the said petition."

The influence of the opposition was sufficient to delay action by the Legislature for three years, but in 1810, the petition was granted and the safety of the pedestrians and vehicles was secured by adopting measures which provided for sufficient width, strength of material, guard rails. The navigation of the river was also considered and due allowance made for the passage of boats and rafts. But after all the work of surveying, petitioning and presentation of facts for and against the enterprise, the great turnpike never was constructed. Perhaps the reasons why it failed will never be known, but among them may be found the condition of the country at that time. These were the years which preceded the second war with England and there was great



DARIUS LINCOLN FOX

(See Page 388)

uncertainty regarding the future which discouraged the investment of capital. Another reason might be that when first presented the farmers, through whose land the route lay, might at first be so strongly in its favor that they would be willing to release a right-of-way without compensation, but later they would lose enthusiasm and value their land too high for the company to purchase. If this project had been carried to completion the arrangements of the highways would have been of a nature that all routes would have been to Pawtucket and Varnum's bridge, as the new one would probably be called. Central bridge would not have been built for a highway but in later years, when East Chelmsford became Lowell and the erection of factories demanded more room, homes for the operatives, a bridge would have been built by the corporations but probably nearer the present Aiken bridge site. From a list of the most active of those who favored the movement a few names of Dracut citizens are shown: Joseph B. Varnum, Simon Coburn, Samuel Bailey, James B. Hildreth, Caleb Blanchard, Benjamin Stevens, Jacob Coburn, David Jones, David Jones, Jr., Benjamin Coburn, Samuel Richardson, Jacob B. Varnum, Daniel Varnum, Peter Harris, Thaddeus Richardson. These men were residents of the part of the town through which this road would have been constructed, while quite naturally, the remonstrants were located in the west part of the town.

CHAPTER XV

CEMETERIES, PHYSICIANS AND TRAGEDIES

THE burial places of the early settlers of Dracut are unknown. It was the custom to bury the bodies in some retired spot on the farm and the graves were seldom marked. Sometimes a flat stone from the field, with initials and date of death rudely cut on it, would be placed at the head of the grave, but when broken and the grave levelled by the elements the place would be forgotten.

> "Each in his narrow cell forever laid
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."
> (*Gray's Elegy*)

The oldest burial ground in the Dracut of early days, but now in Lowell, is between Varnum avenue and the Boulevard about fifty rods east from the Durkee road and east of the Colburn garrison house, and although the first to be located which continues in existence, no very old headstones are to be seen. In 1765, Rev. Thomas Parker was buried here, but in recent years his body was removed to the Woodbine cemetery. Headstones mark the graves of Colburns of at least the third generation, as the graves of the earlier ones are unknown. There are also headstones marking the graves of those whose names are not connected with Dracut history, and several unmarked graves. It is unprotected by a fence, although a lot belonging to some family is protected by posts and chains. A cart path from Varnum avenue leads to it. On the west there are unmarked graves in which are buried the colored people who lived in this neighborhood.

The Woodbine cemetery is near Varnum avenue on the Old Meadow road. It is the burial place of the families who were the residents of that part of the town before annexation, and is well cared for and has shade trees and bank wall. It was a part of the Col. Ansart farm and at his death he was buried here. In 1880, the remains of Rev. Thomas Parker were removed to this cemetery, as already stated, and an account of his ministry is to

be found in the chapter relating to the churches of Dracut. The grave is marked by a slab of dark colored stone of the same kind as those used in place of the earlier field stone and which was followed by granite and marble of the present day. On this headstone are chiseled the features of a man, also a part of a gown and bands, showing that his calling was that of a minister. Underneath this is an elaborate epitaph:

Momento mori
Under this stone is Interred ye Remains of ye
Revd. Thomas Parker
A gentleman of shining mental Powers Adorned with
Prudence, Benevolence & Curtesie of maners.
A warm & Pathetic Preacher of ye Gospel A
Most watchful and tender Pastor of ye Church
In Dracut for ye space of 44 years.
Accomplished with learning Human & Divine
& endowed and adorned by ye social virtues
& affections, who departed this life March 18th, 1765
in the 65th year of his age.

A cemetery is known to have existed near the first meeting house which, as stated in another chapter stood on Varnum avenue nearly opposite the eastern end of the hill on which the Lowell General Hospital now stands. The early settlers followed the custom of their English ancestors and buried their dead in the church yard, the graves being located near the building and on each side of the path. No traces of this cemetery remain and the records, if ever kept, are destroyed, but these facts are known from the statements of those who have seen the graves. An old cemetery was located on the eastern side of the Mammoth road north of Justus Richardson's. Headstones could be seen in recent years, but the site is now occupied by an orchard.

The Pawtucketville cemetery on Mammoth road is of more recent date, the oldest headstone being that of Asa Coburn, who died February 8, 1800. There are two family tombs, that of Capt. Phineas Whiting, built in 1815; the other of David and Capt. William Blood, built in 1819. Here is buried Capt. John Ford who was present at the battle of Bunker Hill and who died

in 1822. There are other Revolutionary soldiers buried here, but as a burial place it is discontinued as the lots are all occupied.

The Oakland cemetery is the burial place of the people of Collinsville. It is situated about a mile from the village and away from the Mammoth road a short distance. It is well cared for as it is in the keeping of an incorporated company composed of the residents of the village and others interested. The Varnums and Clements, who were among the earliest settlers of this part of the town, are buried here; also Peter Coburn, who commanded a company of Dracut men at Bunker Hill on the memorable 17th of June, 1775. Several of the members of this same company also find this their last resting place. This is the burial place of Admiral Eaton and his wife, both descendants of the Varnums. On a knoll adjoining and a little to the north of the cemetery is the burial place of the older residents of the village. There are no headstones, and while the names of those buried are unknown, they were probably the earlier settlers of this vicinity. One headstone, which is a common flat stone, remains with the letters roughly cut in

I A
R C 4
1775

Whatever was originally on the stone has been obliterated by storm and frost. A few years ago the writer found a headstone marked N C, but it has disappeared. These are the initials of the name Nathaniel Clement who lived here and so may have marked his grave. As his son, Daniel, served in the Revolution, it is possible that this ground was in existence and the stone might mark his father's resting place. If so, it is reasonable to suppose that the other graves were those of the early Coburns and Varnums. There are thirty-six of these graves neatly arranged in rows and level with the top of the ground. They are easy to distinguish, as each is covered with cobble stones which protected them from the wolves.

The Hildreth cemetery, by reason of annexation, is now within the limits of the City of Lowell. The title of ownership remains in possession of Dracut, but like other real estate, when annexation occurs, the city obtains no fee in the soil but acquires certain rights not before enjoyed. The cemetery was presented

to the town by Major Ephraim Hildreth, who became a resident of the town in 1709 and whose headstone is the oldest in the cemetery, his death occurring in 1740. In 1752, his sons confirmed the verbal gift of their father by a deed as follows:

"Dracut, November 17, 1752.

We, the subscribers, being willing to confirm our Honored fathers Promis Varbally made Relating to the Buring place Now in Use in Dracutt, to which Track of land there hath, as yet, Been no titel, we therefore conferm the same by the following Record. Said Track of land being Bounded as followeth. Bounded Esterly by the Highway Leading to Robart Hildreth Ferrey, the north and east corner is a stak and stones by said Road: Thens Runing Westerly Eight Rods and a half to a Stak and stone, Thens Runing Southerly Nine Rods to a stake and stones by the said Highway: the above mentioned sd Track of Land is and is to remain a buring Place For the Town of Dracutt, and in Testimony of the above Record being and Remaining a good and fairm Titel to the Town of Dracutt of the abovesaid Track of Land, we have hereunto set our hands the Day above mentioned.

Ephraim Hildreth
William Hildreth
Elijah Hildreth"

The thoughtfulness of these men has given to the town possession of a tract of land which, but for this writing, might have been to the town the cause of much litigation. The first settlers of the Hildreth family were buried on the top of the knoll where their headstones may be seen, but later an additional lot on the west side has been enclosed and reserved for the use of the family. This cemetery is the burial place of many of the men who fought in the Revolution, among them Capt. Stephen Russell, who died in 1800, but the exact location of the grave is unknown. It is thought to have been westerly of the Samuel Fox lot. The headstone of Lieut. Abraham Coburn, who died in 1797, may still be seen near the street, also that of Capt. Ezekiel Hale, near the center of the cemetery, which has been enlarged in recent years by an addition on the south which includes the site of the second schoolhouse in District No. 5.

The burial ground at the Navy Yard village, called the Hamblet or Garrison House cemetery, was at first the family burying place of the Varnums who lived at the Garrison house. A very quaint headstone and the most ancient in the lot is that of Mrs. Ruth, wife of Colonel Joseph Varnum, who died November 28, 1728. Her husband was a son of Samuel Varnum, who came from Ipswich and purchased land in Dracut in 1664. He is probably buried here, but his grave is not marked. His death occurred in 1749. The earlier families of Goodhues, Bowers, and Coburns are buried here. Deacon Theodore Hamblet enlarged the enclosure when he was the owner of the Varnum farm, and it is in the care of the town. Cemetery Commissioners are appointed every year at the annual meeting to keep the burial places of the town in proper condition and money is appropriated for the purpose. A part of this ground is mentioned in the will of Joseph Butterfield Varnum who died in 1858. It does not include the burial place of the earlier residents, but is instead an addition to provide a place for future burials. The following is found in the county records: "I give and bequeath to the town of Dracut a certain piece or parcel of land north of the old burying place near Theodore Hambletts to be by them always kept in order and suitably fenced and to be used only as a burying ground, bounded as follows, beginning at the North West corner at the old Burying Ground and running seven rods to a stake and stones thence at or nearly at right angles five and a half rods on land of J. B. Varnum to a stake and stones, and thence again at a right angle or nearly a right angle five and one half rods to the point of beginning."

At a town meeting following Mr. Varnum's death in 1858, it was voted, "to accept of the donation made to the town by the late Joseph B. Varnum of a piece of land for burying the dead and comply with the conditions of the will."

The Varnum cemetery is on a part of the land known as Primes Purchase, it being the sixteenth lot laid out on the river below Hunt's falls in the Reserved lands. It lies on the cross road which connects the upper and lower roads leading from Dracut to Methuen and is near the Varnum homestead. It was set apart by Samuel Varnum, a grandson of the Samuel who came from Ipswich, for the use of the Varnum and

neighboring families. Many of the Parkers, Coburns and Richardsons of earlier years are buried here. The most conspicuous headstone is one erected to the memory of Gen. Varnum a son of the Samuel, who first settled in this vicinity. The inscription in full is:

"Erected in memory of Hon. Joseph Bradley Varnum whose life was a series of public acts rendering the most important services to his county in offices of honor and trust sustained in the Town, State and Nation. At the age of 18 he was chosen captain and held that position during the Revolutionary War and until he was elected Colonel in 1787. In 1802 he was chosen Brigadier General and in 1805 Major General which office he held until his death. From 1780 to 1795, he was a member of the House of Representatives and Senate of Mass. and a member of the Convention that framed the Constitution in 1780 and of that which revised it in 1820; and from 1795 to 1817 a member of the House of Representatives and Senate of the United States during which time he was Speaker of the House 4 years and President of the Senate 1 year. He died in full hope of immortality Sept. 11, 1821 at the age of 70 years."

The headstone erected to the memory of his wife, Mrs. Molly Butler Varnum, has an inscription relating to her many virtues:

"Erected to the memory of Mrs. Molly Varnum widow of the Hon. Joseph B. Varnum who died April 17, 1833 aet 82 years 10 mos and 2 days. 'She riseth also while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household and a portion to her maidens.' 'Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also and he praiseth her.' 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.' 'Strength and honor are her clothing and she shall rejoice in time to come'."

The cemetery at East Dracut is under the supervision of the town. It is composed of two divisions, one on each side of the highway. That part which is situated on the main road contains many old headstones from which we conclude that a burial place was set apart soon after the settlement of that part of the town. The enclosure became too small to accommodate the families in that vicinity and another lot was added and devoted to burials. This is an elevated spot, sloping to the south.

The cemetery at New Boston village is on the farm which, during the Revolution, was owned by Jonathan Coburn and lately by John W. Peabody. For many years it was not enclosed and was used by the people of the village for a burial place. No deed was given by Mr. Coburn and when, in 1836, the farm came into possession of David Reed, he claimed the cemetery as a part of the farm. The people of vicinity formed an association and purchased the land, the conditions being the payment of five dollars and the erection of a stone wall. There are several Revolutionary soldiers buried here, including the brothers Saul and Thaddeus Coburn, John Bowers and Elijah Coburn.

Physicians.

Dracut was the home of a goodly number of men who have chosen the profession of medicine. The earlier ones were satisfied to spend their lives and perform their duties within the limits of the town, but those of later years have found a larger field of labor in the cities which have come into existence. The life of a country doctor was one of hardship and the duties exacting. The homes of his patients were in all parts of the town and his services were often in demand in neighboring towns, and it was his duty to visit them whatever the condition of the weather, at any time by night or day, with roads often blocked with snow or deep with mud. The faithful family doctor was loved and respected by the older members of the family and held in awe by the younger. His patient horse was as well known as his master, who became a familiar figure as he rode through the town with his saddle bags filled with medicines and instruments, for he must be acquainted with the science of surgery and dentistry as well as with medicine.

There were no specialists in those days and the doctor must be prepared to relieve pain, and administer medicine for all diseases. As already stated, he travelled about on horseback, as wheeled vehicles were almost unknown until after the Revolution, for proof of this we learn that when Col. Ansart lived in Dracut, he owned a chaise which caused everybody to stare in wonder when he rode out. It must have been an agreeable change for the doctor when he was able to discard the saddle and employ the

chaise, which was a two-wheeled vehicle hung on leather thorough-braces and capable of carrying two or more people.

The first physician in point of time was Dr. Samuel Coburn, whose father was Ezra, a younger son of Edward, the first settler in town. He was born in Dracut, September 18, 1684. His home was on the north side of what is now Varnum avenue, a short distance above the building formerly used for the district school. Of the events of his life there is no record, but a notice of his death is found in the Genealogy of the Colburn-Coburn families: "We hear from Dunstable that yesterday was fortnight after the death of Deacon Perham a very old Man. One Mr. Coburn of Dracut, a man about 60 years of age, who had been Bearer to the Deacon and assisted in carrying the Corps returned with the rest of the Company and to all appearance as hearty, hale, fresh and strong as any of them was Struck with Death in an Instant, He dropt to the Earth like a Log and expired in less than five minutes." (Boston News-Letter, January 6, 1757.)

It is difficult, in the absence of records to state positively who succeeded him. The supposition is that it was Dr. James Abbott, as his marriage to Lydia, daughter of Joseph Coburn of the fourth generation, occurred in 1758 and they settled in Dracut where occurred the births of twelve children. He lived on a farm at Collinsville and the farmhouse stood on the Mammoth road, opposite the tenements of the American Woolen Co. It was later the home of the Hamblet family and was removed a few years ago. Dr. Abbott's name appears on the Roll of Honor as Surgeon's Mate. There is no record of the date of his death, but his successor was Dr. Amos Bradley, who, in 1785, commenced his duties as physician. When a boy, he lived on his father's farm, but later chose this profession. In "The physicians of Lowell and Vicinity," by D. N. Patterson, M. D., reference is made to him: "He made his daily tour of professional visits through the town and surrounding country on horseback. When in the saddle he wore a pair of felt leggings to prevent his trousers from being soiled by the mud or dust of the road. In their accustomed place he carried the ever memorable saddle bags, which when opened at the bedside of the sick, revealed a medley of well filled phials of medicine, various instruments and other paraphernalia of his profession." The circuit over which

for so many years he travelled in the discharge of his professional duties has been described and is here quoted. "After leaving his house, which was at Hovey square, immediately north of the Blanchard Hospital, he made his calls in the immediate vicinity and crossing the river at Bradley's ferry into that part of Chelmsford now Lowell he continued his journey through Middlesex, North Chelmsford and Tyngsboro where he would recross the river by Tyng's ferry, thence he would proceed through the north western part of Dracut to Pelham, N. H., returning to his home by the turnpike road through that section of Dracut known as 'Black North.' He was highly respected and had a large circle of friends." His death occurred May 6, 1817, at the age of 58.

At the death of Dr. Amos, his duties were assumed by his son, Dr. Peleg Bradley, who for many years had practiced with his father and was in company with him four years before Dr. Amos' death. Dr. Peleg lived to see the birth of Lowell and its remarkable growth as his death occurred in 1848, at the age of 56. His professional visits included the towns already mentioned, to which were added Methuen, Andover, Billerica and Tewksbury, but as the population increased he removed to Lowell, where he spent his later years and much of his country practice was assumed by other physicians. His medicines were purchased in Boston, but he manufactured his own pills and plasters. His fees were small compared with those of the present day, viz., office calls with advice and medicine, twenty-five cents; visits, fifty cents. He was a skillful physician, ready to adopt new methods and to forsake the beaten path if by so doing he could advance the science of medicine. His son, William Henry, was born in Dracut, February 11, 1824, and succeeded his father as a practicing physician. His practice was principally in Lowell and surrounding towns, but he removed to the West after serving as surgeon in the Civil War and died at St. Louis, Mo.

Israel Hildreth was born in 1791, one year before the birth of Peleg Bradley and their professional life covered nearly the same period. Choosing for his life work the profession of medicine, he studied with Dr. Thomas of Tyngsboro and Dr. Wyman of Chelmsford, afterward attending a course of lectures in Boston. The duties of a country doctor were shared with Dr.

Bradley as the increase of population, about the year 1825, caused by the erection of cotton mills, demanded the services of two physicians. In common with the other doctors of the time he was ready with the knife and saw for amputation or the forceps to remove an aching tooth. He had a broad mind, ever ready to accept new methods and his cheerful disposition made him welcome in the sick room. Before his death the occupation of country doctor had ceased to exist. Dr. Bradley had removed to Lowell and Dr. Hildreth spent the remaining years of his life on his farm in Dracut. He was the last of the Dracut doctors and the jogging horse and thoroughbrace chaise remain only as a memory.

Tragedies.

In common with other towns, scenes of violence have performed their part in the history of Dracut. As its southern line was the Merrimack river, Beaver Brook flowing through its entire length and bordering on several ponds the opportunities for deaths caused by drowning were many. Deaths caused by stroke of lightning, falling from buildings when in process of erection and other causes all contributed to furnish scenes of tragedy. There are those to whom the cares of life were a burden and who chose to appoint a time when it should cease. Only a few cases are on record where a life has been taken by the hand of another. In 1858, a blacksmith, Joshua Heath by name, lived in the northeast part of the town, near the Pelham line. His wife was dead and with a son and daughter, he lived remote from neighbors, deriving a small income from the exercise of his trade in which he excelled, especially in the manufacture of knives. The children were deficient in intelligence, the daughter being almost idiotic and the son weak in intellect. Unable to reason correctly although possessing that peculiar quality of craftiness so common in the mentally deficient, they considered their father to be a burden and planned to take his life. Their first attempt was to administer to him a dose of tea prepared from apple peru, a poisonous plant, which was not sufficient to cause his death, although it stupefied him. While in this condition they loaded a musket with scraps of iron and discharged it with fatal effects, then digging a shallow grave in the blacksmith shop they buried him. Parties who came to have work performed found the shop

locked and could get no information from the son and daughter, but from facts gathered by questioning the girl they found the body partially covered with dirt. The authorities were notified and the son arrested, the trial resulting in a sentence to state prison for life where as time passed on he became the oldest prisoner in the institution. The daughter was taken to the town farm, but her physical condition was such that she lived but a short time.

Gordon, in his "Early Grants," says: "The husband of one of the Colburn girls, Richardson by name, was killed by a blow of his opponents fist in a brawl; and I find no indictment based on this lamentable scuffle." In the vital records, a young son of Benjamin and Clarissa Bradley, named William, was killed by being kicked by a horse; this occurred in 1823, the family lived at the Navy Yard village near the mill. In 1789, Aaron, son of Eleazer and Bridget Coburn, aged 21 years, was "suddenly killed by the fall of a tree." In 1744, Henry Colburn was killed "by a fall of a fraime at a Raising." In 1825, George Washington, son of Jonathan and Mercy Richardson was killed by falling from a building. Obadiah, son of Asa and Elizabeth Parker, was killed by being struck by lightning when engaged in mowing for a farmer in Tewksbury.

In 1867, Dea. Reuben Coburn was killed by falling from an apple tree. He lived in the brick house at the foot of Tanhouse hill. About 1870, two men lost their lives while digging a well at the Navy Yard village. Mr. Pierce, who lived in Maine, was a well digger by profession and assisted by Austin, son of James and Harriet Frye, had excavated about twenty feet when a large mass of sand fell and buried them. In 1836, Myron aged 11 years, son of Marcus L. and Elizabeth Coburn, was killed by being thrown from an ox cart, the heavy wheels passing over his body. John, son of Anthony Negro, was drowned in April, 1739.

An event occurred which brought sadness to Dracut homes in 1799. On April 16th, of that year, three little girls lost their lives by drowning. They were Sibbel, daughter of Abijah and Esther Wood, aged 12 years, and Lydia and Orpah, daughters of Joshua and Lydia Thissell. Their ages were 11 and 8 years. Their home was on Dracut heights, now Christian hill, and while at play, probably near the river, the sad accident occurred.

CHAPTER XVI

MINES, QUARRIES AND FISHERIES

AT what time or by whom the mine in East Dracut was discovered we have no certain knowledge. One account states that some Welsh or Cornish miners prospecting along the course of the river found the outcropping of minerals at this place. Another attributes the discovery to surveyors who found their magnetic needle to be deflected by the presence of iron, a not uncommon occurrence. The earliest mention on record is in 1710, when the Reserved Lands began to be surveyed and roads were laid out. References at that time to the "mine pit" and "mine pit hill" are to be found in old records. It is possible that when opened it was with the expectation of finding gold or silver, but as it contained only iron no further attempts were made to develop it until 1726, when the owner of the land, Joseph Varnum, entered into partnership with Joseph East of Boston, who lived on the farm in East Dracut, known as the Herbert Coburn farm, on the Pelham road, leading to Lawrence. At the above named date the metal nickel was unknown, but iron and other minerals were supposed to be abundant.

A contract was made dated September 9, 1726, and in it Mr. Varnum gives conditionally to Mr. East "one half part of all the mines and minerals that shall be found by the said Joseph East and Joseph Varnum their heirs etc as equal portions upon the same, when refined, upon a certain tract of land in Dracut in the easterly part of the town bounded by Merrimack River on the south, by Ephraim Hildreth and Josiah Colburn on the west by Ephraim Curtis and Cheever land on the north and by Joseph Varnum and Mr. Higginson on the east." The contract gives permission to use any fallen timber under fifteen inches in diameter for the use of the works, leave to erect a stamping and refining mill on the brook near the mine pit, and liberty to flood the land between September 1st and April 30th. Mr. East was to receive no salary, but to have one half of the net proceeds of

the products when smelted and refined. He was to have full control of all the work and to pay one-half of the expenses. Mr. Varnum was to furnish one able-bodied man. The business was conducted by Varnum and East and each had entire control of their share, providing it did not interfere with the contract. By a deed of sale dated October 13, 1727, Joseph East conveyed to North Ingham, a mathematical instrument maker of Boston, for the sum of £150, 3/16 of the whole Lot, being an eighth and a half of all the mines and minerals on the land described. By the close of 1730, East had sold all his rights in the mine to North Ingham, Job Lewis, Samuel Eames and George Cradock, and thereafter seems to have had no further connection with the business, although he purchased a farm in Dracut, eastward of Cedar pond, and became a resident of the town.

Varnum also disposed of the major portion of his rights to Adam Winthrop, who purchased one sixth for £220, and to Ezekiel Cheever and Job Lewis. The greater part of those owning shares in the mine were residents of Boston. The terms of sale in each deed were alike, viz., the right to dig "oar" and make improvements, but not to undermine any building unless payment was made, this amount to be determined by disinterested parties, to pay their share for digging and draining shafts and carrying on improvements, and if the mines yielded gold or silver they were to pay their proportionate part of the one fifth part which belonged to the king. They could cut any pine tree which was less than fifteen inches in diameter and use any fallen trees. They had leave to set up a stamping mill and to flow the meadows as before mentioned. The brook was the eastern branch of Winthrop's, later called Richardson's brook, and runs on the northwest of Mine Pit Hill. The length of time in which the mine was worked is not known, but it is supposed to have been found unprofitable and abandoned. Later the land came into possession of Joseph Bradley Varnum, grandson of Joseph, the original owner, and the mine is said to have been worked in the time of the Revolution for the manufacture of cannon balls.

An old account book in the Varnum family contains items of sums paid for labor at the mine in 1777. A shaft was sunk to a depth of forty-three feet, which with the cellar like holes in the ledge and heaps of stones which had been thrown out by blast-

ing, were all that remained until these later years of those early mining operations. When the shaft was again cleared from water and debris, some relics of the ancient workings were discovered, some drills and decaying plank, the latter indicating the erection of buildings at an early date.

In 1876, a company was incorporated which leased the land and commenced the work of mining as nickel was found to exist with iron ore. They bonded the adjoining land, erected buildings, installed a stamping machine and steam machinery for furnishing power. They drained the shaft and sunk it to a depth of sixty-one feet. In a paper read before the Old Residents' Association in 1879 it is stated that, "It is expected that in one year from this time the establishment will be able to supply daily 400 pounds of commercial nickel, ten tons of sulphuric acid and eight tons of pure iron, each of which has a marketable demand and value as that of any product of the best farm in the country. * * * If therefore the Dracut nickel mine shall yield as it is expected by the owners to do, it will certainly be a prominent feature in the future of Lowell." In 1881, the property came into possession of the Dracut Nickel Co., organized under Maine laws with a capital of $500,000. The president was Wm. E. Whitehead; the treasurer, Abel T. Atherton; and the secretary, Jerome B. Melvin. But the enterprise was not a success. Great difficulty was experienced in securing experts who understood the reduction of ores. For this and other reasons the mine was again abandoned. Test pits had been sunk of the adjoining land of Joseph Gilman and Luther and Bradley Coburn where there were outcroppings of ore and if the mining had been successful these ledges would also have been opened. The buildings were standing in 1889, but the elements were gradually causing them to decay, while, at present writing, all that remains consists of heaps of rocks, deep gullies and gloomy pits.

A communication in the *Morning Times*, dated May 2, 1896, adds to the interest which is attached to this ancient work: "The only authority that I am able to command says that nickel was discovered in 1751. There is no doubt that it is present in large quantity in this mine. Nearly every geologist in the State has visited the mine and most of them concur in the opinion that

it could be worked with profit. The ledge is of trap rock. Enclosed in the trap is an ore called pyrrhotite, often called magnetic ore and iron pyrites. Its symbol is F E 11 S 12. This is the richest ore for nickel and often contains from three to five per cent. of that metal. The presence of iron in this trap is very noticeable and many rusty fragments are scattered about. We brought home some specimens and among them are found not only feldspar but also limestone in the trap. It was an interesting place to visit for several reasons, scientific, historic and so forth. Its scientific interest will always remain and perhaps the commercial history of the mine is not yet ended."

Granite Quarries

Ledges of granite or gneiss are found in the Pawtucketville section of the town. Ward's ledge, near the terminice of the Pawtucketville car line, extends from Mammoth Road easterly nearly to East Meadow Road, or Pond Street as it is now called. Farther north and lying between Mammoth Road and the Donohoe Road is an extensive ledge or series of ledges. On what was called the Old Gumpus Road from West Meadow Road to Mammoth Road, near the latter is another ledge. All of these ledges show signs of extensive quarrying in past years, but are now abandoned. These were the sources from which were drawn the material for the foundation of the factory buildings of Lowell, and for other purposes before the use of cement for concrete was known. Across the New Hampshire line, but formerly included within the limits of Dracut, are the Carlton quarry and several at Gage Hill, the latter still used to some exent.

Fishing Rights

As wild animals were abundant the Indians procured their meat by hunting. And as the rivers were stocked with fish they were able to provide a supply of food with little labor. Sturgeon, salmon, shad and alewives were abundant, the latter to such an extent that, being considered of an inferior quality, was used by the farmers for fertilizer. When apprentices were



EDWARD COLBURN'S GARRISON HOUSE

(See Page 855)

"bound out," as it was called, to a trade, an article was inserted in the contract providing that they should not be obliged to eat salmon excepting when agreed upon at the time of apprenticeship.

In 1653, the General Court set apart for the Indians a tract of 500 acres at Pawtucket falls for their use as fishing grounds, and this was later called the Indian Reservation. When later the Indians sold their lands to Jonathan Tyng and Thomas Hinchman they reserved the right to visit the falls and fish at any time. Within comparatively recent years a few families of Indians visited the falls each year and are said to have camped on Long Island, called then Musquash Island, near the bend of the river, but now losing its identity by reason of the filling in of the channel between the Island and Lakeview avenue. The northerly end of Aiken Street bridge rests on what was Long Island. Tyng and Hinchman sold shares in their purchase to many others, including the fishing rights. At one time there were forty-two different parties who owned these rights. As early as 1801 a petition had been presented to the General Court for permission to erect a dam across the river. The people of Dracut considered it an invasion of their rights and, at a town meeting, voted to present a petition remonstrating against the granting of the first-named petition. As this petition will convey some idea of the value of these rights at that time, a brief record is here inserted. Voted, "That the erection of a dam across the Merrimack River at Pawtucket falls will, in the opinion of the town, totally destroy the fish in the said river and deprive the people of the important privilege which they for a long time have enjoyed without molestation, of taking near their doors the most delicate food and much of the real necessaries of life." But petitions of remonstrance were only of service temporarily, the valuable fishing rights were soon to become valueless and with the construction of the dams at Lowell and Lawrence and the admission of poisonous dyes and contents of the sewers to the river, the fisheries were ruined.

As early as 1740 the General Court passed an act forbidding the building of any dam across a stream unless suitable provision was made for the free passage of fish to the water above the dam. Although many plans have been devised to comply with

this law and fish-ways constructed, such plans have met with little success at the present time. As it would be difficult to define fishery rights without dissension on the part of the owners, it became necessary to arrange for the settlement of disputed questions. The owners of these rights prepared a contract, which has, with its original signatures, peculiar spelling and abundance of capital letters, been preserved and laid away for many years, to be reproduced in this history:

"Know all men by these presents That We Edward Coburn, John Coburn, Joseph Varnum, Timothy Coburn, Robert Coburn, Aaron Coburn, Daniel Coburn, Ezekiel Richardson, Abraham Blood, Christopher Williams, John Varnum, the Heirs of Abraham Varnum, Moses Richardson, Joseph Hamblet, the Heirs of Jabish Coburn all of Dracut, Timothy Clark, John Butterfield and Zachary Richardson of Chelmsford and James Littlehale of Dunstable all in ye County of Middx Being Propriators In a Great Sean Fishery in Said Dracut at ye mouth of Beaver Brook at ye place called ye Bunt Fishery In merrimack River. And We Being owners & Proprietors in a Great Sean made and provided for said Fishery With Roaps and accoutrements to sd sean & a fishing Boat provided by us for ye use of sd Fishery there. We Every and Each of us owning one Twentyeth part of sd Sean, Roaps and accoutrements to sd Sean Belonging and the one Twentyeth part of said Boat each of us all excep the above said Joseph Varnum & he ye said Joseph Varnum ones one tenth of sd Sean, Roaps & Boat. And for ye Future Peace, Quiet & Good order of sd Propriators & to prevent Disputes, Controversies and Confusion ariseing amongst sd Propriators & in sd Company & Sosiaty We & Each and Every of us & Each & Every of our Heirs Will and Shall at all times Forever Hereafter Submit our Selve to a Majer Vote of the Majer part of ye said propriators at any meeting of them met for that Business at all times and in all things any Way Relating to manageing & carrying on the Said Fishery and settleing the account thereon and that we will at all times & in all things Relating thereto submit to each vote and if any or either of us at any time Hereafter Refuse or neglect to comply to any and every such vote that of sd propriators so neglecting or Refusing to comply to such

matters and things as shall be Injoyned him or them to Do & perform by ye majer part of sd propriators at any such meeting he or they so Refusing or Neglecting to Do & perform as shall be Injoyned by ye majer part of sd propriators he so neglecting shall be De Clared No partner In sd Sean & Fishery & be liable to a suite from sd company & propriators for non performunce. In Wittness Whereof We Have hereunto Set our Hands this Sixth Day of may A. D. 1761'' 1781 May 14 ''The proprietors of the great sean, Part of them, met to tie on and mend the great net, That is, self, Capt. Peter Coburn, Jonathan Varnum, Eleazer Coburn, Jonas Varnum, Jabish Coburn, Tim: Williams & Timo. Coburn.''

At a town meeting, held March 14, 1714, it was voted:

''That Caleb Varnum, John Varnum, Edward Coburn and John Coburn Jr. should have the fishing place in Merrimack River two pool (pole) into ye River upon Dracut Side in the bounds of said town for the season of fishing salmon, shad, alewives &c for the year 1714. And likewise the Town of Dracut does engage not to molest them on any account whatever. Likewise these men that have hired this fishing place doth and hath engaged to pay to the Town of Dracut 16 pounds on the 20th day of June next for the use of said town and with the receipt they are to have the salmon pots that are already made and they shall pay for the nails that hold the posts.''

At a town meeting, held March 3, 1715, a protest was entered after a majority vote was passed to give a lease of the rights.

''We the subscribers do hereby protest and declare ourselves against all the articles and business done at this town meeting relating to the letting the fishing place &c within 3 rods of the shore for the reasons following. First it is not the sd towns property. The lands on the shore are appropriated to particular persons and three rods from the shore are in some places in the channel and in some places across the channel. Second. The vote passed tends to debar and hinder particular persons from

rights in catching fish in ye channel which is and always ought to be free to all persons.

Abraham Varnum	Thomas Varnum
Joseph Varnum	John Littlehale Jr.
John Littlehale	Samuel Varnum
Joseph Varnum Jr.	John Varnum."

There is no record of any notice being taken of this protest, and as, later, the town continued to issue leases, it is probable that the petitioners were "given leave to withdraw." The quantity of fish which was taken may be estimated by the following items: An ordinary catch by a single hand of the seine would be about 1500 shad and 3000 alewives. Thirty bushels of eels have been caught in a single evening from one hole at the Great Bunt. The price of shad was ten cents each, while lamprey eels could be purchased for two cents each. The cheaper quality of fish was often carted away for fertilizer.

A clause in the will of John Varnum, dated 1783, relates to the value placed upon the fishing rights. To his son, Jonas, he gives, "also 1/3 part of all my Rights in the Lands at the mouth of Beaver Brook called the Great Bunt sean Proprietors Lands with 1/3 Right of a small house standing thereon, called the Proprietors Fish House, with 1/3 part of my right in the Great Sean, Called the Great Bunt sean, also 1/3 part of all my right of the privilege of the Fishery at Petucket Falls, and 1/3 part of all my wharfings, staging and privilege of building same or setting of Salmon pots as any other fishing at said Falls."

About 1817, the question arose as to what was the town's interest in the fisheries. When the land owners commenced to sell land to the Locks and Canals Co. the way was opened for litigation and a prospective destruction of these valuable rights. A committee consisting of J. B. Varnum, Isaac Coburn and Daniel Varnum was appointed to examine titles and ascertain what rights, if any, the town had in the premises. After careful study they reported that it was their opinion that the fishing rights on the north or Dracut side of the river belonged to the town, but by their neglect to make improvements and by the action of the land owners the town might have lost its claim.

A few years later these rights, on account of the erection of the mills, became valueless.

As late as 1820, Jonas Varnum sold to the Locks and Canals Co. his fishing rights between Cat Brook and Pawtucket Falls. He, with eight others, owned these rights in common and he sold one-eighth of his undivided part for $400. The control of fishing rights in the various brooks was vested in the town and votes were passed at the annual meetings in regulation of these rights.

March 1, 1779, it as "Voted that there shall be no alewives taken in Beaver Brook, or ye Brook called Dubble Brook or in Dennison's Brook only on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays & on these days not to take any in sd Beaver Brook within 30 feet of the sluiceway at Capt. Hales' mill; and no fish to be taken on Dubble Brook from the mouth to the road that leads from Dr. Abbotts to Capt. Coburns, and that there shall be none taken in sd Dennisons Brook between the townway easterly of ye old mill called Wilsons mill & the upper side of said mill."

In 1780, it was voted that "no person shall catch alewives by net or otherwise from the mouth of Beaver Brook to the State line, or on Double Brook to Long Pond on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays."

These entries show the value placed upon the fish and the care with which they were protected from extermination. There was no intimation of the coming days when the river water would be polluted with poisonous dyes and waste from the cities which would cause the fish to be driven from the streams and the valuable fishing rights destroyed.

CHAPTER XVII

ELECTRIC SERVICE, DRACUT WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

THE establishment of factories in Lowell and Dracut was the cause of extensive changes in the town. Until the early part of the last century, the town was composed of farming people, but the change mentioned caused villages to be formed. For more than a half a century no change of any importance occurred until the introduction of street cars, which furnished quick and easy transportation and resulted in the transformation of farms into small building lots and the erection of houses. The lumbering stage coach was discarded and railroads furnished superior means of transportation for passengers and freight. This town has never been on the direct line of the road and the only public conveyance was the mail carrier's wagon which passed through the town three times each week.

In 1863, a charter of incorporation was granted to the Lowell Horse Railroad Company and on March 1, 1864, the first car was started. The citizens of Dracut, realizing the advantage of a car line, applied for a charter which was granted July 2, 1886, under the name of the Lowell and Dracut Horse Railroad Company. Work was commenced at once and rails laid from the Navy Yard village to Lowell and on some of the streets in the city on which the Lowell company was not located. The officers were John Ames, President; Walter M. Sawyer, Treasurer; and Percy Parker, Clerk. These were succeeded in 1887 by August Fels, President; John F. Murphy, Superintendent; Percy Parker, Treasurer; and in 1888, P. F. Sullivan was Superintendent and Clerk. The first line extended to Parker avenue. River street was named Lakeview avenue at a later date, a new street was opened from Bachman street to Hamblet avenue, a large stable was built at the Navy Yard and cars and horses purchased.

The charter permitting the company to operate cars in the streets of Lowell created a competition which proved detrimental to the success of the enterprise and it was considered expedient

to enter into alliance with the older company. The two companies in 1891 united and formed a new company called the Lowell and Suburban Company with Hon. E. M. Tucke, President, while Mr. Parker and Mr. Sullivan retained their offices as Treasurer and Clerk.

The introduction of electricity as a motive power wrought great changes. Poles and wires were placed in position, heavier rails laid and the work of equipping the cars with suitable apparatus was done at the car shops at the Navy Yard Village. Until 1891, power was furnished by the Lowell Electric Light Company, but in that year the car company established an equipment of its own and the use of the former company's power was discontinued. The termination of the line on Bridge street, while the cars were propelled by horse power, was Nineteenth street, but the new company extended it to Dracut Centre about 1893. In 1894, the road was in operation between Lowell and Lawrence which passed through Dracut, near Merrimack river. Lakeview Park on Tyng's Pond, now Lake Mascuppic, was opened in 1889 and the Lakeview avenue line constructed to that point which soon became a continuous line to Nashua. The Hovey Square line was constructed in 1910. In 1901 a road from Pelham Center was opened by the Massachusetts and New England Company. This was a New Hampshire Company and the line connects with the Lowell lines at Old Meadow Road on Moody street. The advantages to the town are obvious. Its prosperity is seen in the transportation of farms into thriving villages with their increase in taxable property and larger population. The factories are no longer dependent on residents of the neighborhood for operatives, the facilities for education are increased by the transportation of the pupils on the cars, the easy means of access to the city enables the housekeeper to reach the city stores, and the places of amusement are more easy to visit.

Electricity, at first used only for propelling the cars, has also been used for the lighting of the public streets and for public and private buildings. This method of lighting was introduced in 1907, power being furnished by the Lowell Electric Light Company. In this connection the telephone service may be noticed. The Lowell Telephone Company extends its wires to

all parts of the town, and while at first used only by the manufacturing companies it has become indispensable to the farmers and housekeepers.

Dracut Water Supply System

The first settlers realized the need of pure water and in selecting a building site, they located if possible near a spring. This accounts in a measure for the existence of old cellars far from highways and often to be found in the forests. When the town laid out the highways these sites were abandoned and new buildings erected on the new roads. Wells were dug, situated at first several rods from the buildings for fear of contamination by waste from barns and cesspools. Many of these old wells still exist, although the cellars may show only a slight depression in the surface of the ground.

The method of obtaining the water was by means of a long pole with hook to which the pail was attached and by which the pail was raised to the top of the well. This was followed by the well sweeps, which consisted of upright posts placed in the ground and forked at the top. In this fork a pole was hung, swinging freely on a pin, to one end of which was attached a heavy stone or other weight, while to the other a pole was fastened which in turn held the bucket. When the bucket was lowered and filled, the labor of raising it was greatly diminished by the action of the weight as a counterpoise. Some farm houses were situated near a hill on which would be located a spring and by means of pipes, water would be conveyed to the buildings by gravitation. In later years, the hydraulic ram and windmill were employed to furnish the power which forced the water through the pipes. The next improvement was the use of logs through which holes were bored lengthwise and joined together, resting on a stone at the bottom of the well, the principle upon which they acted was the same as that used at present, viz., the producing of a vacuum in the pipe into which the water is forced by the pressure of the air which amounts to fifteen pounds on each square inch of surface.

The existence of wells in cities and thickly settled villages became a menace to the health of the people and finally led to the introduction of the present water system. About 1840, Hon.

Benjamin F. Varnum, who had settled on Dracut heights, now Centralville hill, with Joseph Bradley and John K. Simpson, received articles of incorporation as the Dracut and Lowell Acqueduct Company. A tract of land was purchased for a site for a reservoir, but before the plans were perfected Mr. Varnum died and the project was abandoned. At the Navy Yard village the late John Ames installed a water system which supplied some of the families of the neighborhood besides the tenants of his houses. A well near Tan House brook was equipped with a pump and windmill which was soon changed to electric power and a reservoir placed on the high land near Upland street.

In 1905, the residents of Dracut Center and the Navy Yard village received permission to form a corporate body called the Dracut Water Supply System. Land was purchased between Walbrook and New Boston village, wells were driven and a pumping station built. The water is forced through a pipe to the top of Marsh Hill to a reservoir and distributed through smaller pipes to the houses. The supply at first was 200,000 gallons every twenty-four hours, but additional wells have been driven and the supply increased. The height of the reservoir gives an abundant pressure and the quality is unsurpassed. The district at the present time includes only the two villages mentioned and the town as a whole has no part in the conduct of affairs. Money is appropriated at the annual town meeting for the assistance of the department on account of the benefit which is rendered by the use of the hydrants by which much taxable property is saved. Power is furnished by a gasoline engine and a gas engine has been installed to be used if necessary.

Mention may be made here of the volunteer fire companies which have been organized since the water pipes were laid. A fire house, in each of the two villages which is supplied with water, has been provided where at first hose carriages drawn by horses were placed. The horses were furnished from nearby stables and the men summoned by messengers. Gasoline motor cars now furnish the motive power, telephones and signal boxes are used to call the members and a large electric whistle, lately installed at each village, calls the inhabitants to their assistance and notifies the school children when on stormy days there are no sessions of school.

CHAPTER XVIII

SURVEY OF ROADS

By Hon. B. F. Varnum

"MINUTES of the Survey of the Town of Dracut, taken by Benjamin F. Varnum in A. D. 1831, under the Superintendence of David Blood, Esq., William F. Osgood & B. F. Varnum a committee of said town for that purpose by order of the Legislature of the Commonwealth and also of the roads, rivers and ponds." This is the title of an article in a surveyor's book found at the Gen. J. B. Varnum house on the Lawrence road. In the book the angles at the bends of the river and roads are given but omitted in this history, distances only shown. Notes in explanation will be added. "Survey of the Town commencing at the South East corner at Merrimac River and running by said River."

From Methuen Line to opposite Concord River	1332	Rods
" Pawtucket Bridge Road	664	"
" Marbles Brook	107	"
" Brook	46	"
" Opp. Middlesex M. House	263	"
" " Canal	14	"
" Col. Bloods Road	136	"
" Opp. Stony Brook	210	"
" Brook	245	"

Dracut contains *15673* Acres.

Long Pond	150	
Peters	86	15673
Tyngs	12	575¾
Beever River	30	
Other streams	10¾	150971¼
Roads	287½	
	575¾	

Road from Methuen line to Tyngsboro line.

To	Moses Bixbys	46 Rods	
"	Theodore Parkers	12 "	
"	George Coburns	138 "	
"	Widow Daniel Varnums	176 "	Henry Varnum
"	B. F. Varnums	14 "	J. B. Varnums
"	Benjamin Coburns	125 "	
"	Samuel Richardson lane	37 "	
"	Mill Brook	10 "	
"	David Richardsons	34 "	
"	Moses Cheevers	24 "	
"	George Kelleys	198 "	
"	Joshua Varnums	111 "	
"	Ezekiel Cheevers	84 "	Stickney farm.
"	Col. Varnum's Old House	86 "	
"	Road East of School House	6 "	Broadway
"	School House	7 "	
"	Road west of School House	4 "	Arlington St.
"	Samuel Fletchers	54 "	
"	Lane to Poor House	14 "	Arlington Ave.
"	Poor House	75 "	
"	B. F. Varnums Tavern House	20 "	Library
"	Samuel F. Woods	14½ "	
"	Opp. Meeting House	9 "	
"	Perley Parkers	3 "	
"	Intersection of County Road	5 "	Bridge St.
"	Samuel Parkers	2 "	Mr. Udells
"	Heman Flints	13 "	
"	Simon Harris	9 "	
"	Intersection of the Road	6 "	
"	Charles Foxs	51 "	Stephen Russell
"	Dea. Stickneys & J. P. Hoveys	46 "	
"	Intersection of Road	3 "	Hildreth St.
"	Ebenezer Hanchetts	4 "	Blanchard Hospital
"	Road west of Common	10 "	
"	Tan House Brook	49 "	
"	Enoch Fryes	31 "	Pollard house

To Wid Coburns Lane	10	Rods	Now occupied by row of houses on left of Upland St.
" James Hazeltons	2	"	Geo. Clark
" Enoch Fryes New House	6	"	
" The Doak House	11	"	
" Sewell Stanleys	5	"	James H. Wilsons'
" Life Hamblets & E. F. Goodhues	4	"	Ames & Peabody
" E. F. Goodhue	12	"	Now Dr. Heald's on Lakeview Avenue
" Benjamin Bradleys	4	"	Sherlock house
" Lane to S. Burts & Stotts	8	"	Brookside St.
" East end of Stanleys Bridge	2½	"	
" Acrost the rver	7	"	
" The factory	3	"	
" Gurneys Store	7	"	
" Ebenezer Reeds	3	"	
" Samuel Harveys Lane	11	"	School St.
" The Barnes House	2	"	
" " School House	14	"	
" Road by Peter Bowers	23	"	Hampson St.
" Joseph B. Varnums	16	"	
" Joseph Goulds	13	"	
" Theodore Hambletts	22	"	Garrison House
" The other house	33	"	
" Charles Bodwells	71	"	Opp. Gatehouse
" Sam Marshs	14	"	
" Jonathan Goulds	46	"	
" Cyrus Varnums	14	"	
" John Pages	11	Rods	
" Joseph Varnums	9	"	
" Cat Brook	14	"	
" Col. Varnums Old house	29	"	
" Old Toll house & New Toll house	3	"	

To	County Road	5 Rods	Mammoth Rd
"	Col. James Varnums	17 "	
"	Stone Dam	32 "	
"	Marbles Brook	76 "	
"	Props. L & C: on Mer. River	9 "	
"	Widow T. Coburns	31 "	
"	Bradley Varnums	45 "	
"	Road	3 "	Meadow Road
"	Widow Ansarts	5 "	
"	Willard Coburns	26 "	
"	Jeremiah Varnums	22 "	
"	Ephraim Coburns	60 "	
"	School House	42 "	
"	Moses B. Coburns	14 "	
"	Nathaniel B. Coburns	30 "	Garrison House
"	Road	6½ "	Totman
"	David Bloods	18 "	
"	Old House	1 "	

To	Col. Bloods road	18 Rods
"	Asa Underwoods	3½ "
"	Road	6 "
"	Philip Pierces	30½ "
"	Timothy Coburns	34 "
"	New Bridge Road	72 "
"	Widow Ditsons	190 "
"	Asa Carkins	55 "
"	Tyngsboro line	30¾ "

Pawtucket Bridge Road.

To	Road	8 Rods	Riverside St.
"	Meeting House	16 "	
"	Osgood Danes	69 "	
"	Sylvester Pierces	15 "	
"	John Cheevers	18 "	
"	Old Meadow Road	82 "	
"	Road to Parker Varnums	211 "	
"	Henry C. Osgoods	33 "	
"	Opposite Solomon Osgood's	16 "	

To Road to J. B. Varnums	4 Rods		Break Neck Hill Road
" Road to W^m^ Websters	26	"	Nashua Road
" Jonathan Varnums	11	"	Justus Richardsons
" Solomon Abbotts	52	"	
" Road to Jonas Varnums	79	"	
" Double Brook	24	"	
" " "	16	"	
" Peter Hambletts	99	"	
" Road to Ames	63	"	Lakeview Ave.
" Daniel P. Coburns	11	"	Frank Foss
" Jonas Varnums	19	"	
" Peter Coburns	83	"	
" Reuben Coburns	74	"	
" Asa Clements	112	"	
" John P. Cutters	32	"	Hill farm
" New Hampshire line	35	"	

Christian Hill Road Commencing at County Road Tenth & Bridge Street.

To Nehemiah Jones	79 Rods		
" Joshua Thissells	14	"	
" Nathan Thissells	7	"	
" Joshua W. Wights	20	"	
" John Parkers	9	"	
" Amos Woods	20	"	
" School House	76	"	
" Ephraim Woods	16	"	
" Richardsons lane	58	"	
" Nathan Thissells	14	"	
" Daniel Kelleys	40	"	
" Reuben Richardsons	42	"	Jona. Fox's
" The Other Road	73	"	Lawrence Road

Jona. Varnums To Tyngsboro Line
Commencing near said Varnums. Justus Richardson's

To Road to Jonas Varnum Jr.	125 Rods
" Marshalls Lane	245½ "

To Jesse Marshalls	5½ Rods	
" Ralph Fox's	70½ "	
" W[m] Websters Lane	74 "	
" near I. Perhams & Tyngsboro Line	92 "	
" Tyngsboro Line	26 "	

By Jonas Varnum Junior—Commencing at the other road near Samuel Hambletts.

To Samuel Hambletts	24 Rods	
" Jonas Varnum Junior	61 "	
" County Road	171½ "	Mammoth Rd near Double Brook

Road by Jonas Varnums Commencing at the road by Sewell Marshalls. Mills Corner.

To Double Brook	86 Rods	
" Jonas Varnums	17 "	Joseph P. Varnums
" Jabish Coburns	41 "	Enoch Mills
" County Road	40½ "	Mammoth Road

Road from near Samuel Hambletts (Totman Road) to Nathaniel B. Coburns. Garrison House.

To Wid. Lews	481 Rods	
" Zimri Lews	59 "	
" Road near Nath[l] B. Coburns	79 "	Varnum Ave.

Road by Capt. Bloods' beginning at the North end Varnum Ave.

To other branch	6 rods	
" Robert Parks	16 "	
" Capt. Bloods	24 "	
" Col. Bloods	44 "	
" the River	5 "	
" Old house	10 "	

Road from Thomas & Samuel Varnums (Varnum Ave.) by Peter Bowers to near J. B. Varnums. (Meadow Road, Pond Street and Hampson Street).

From House to gate	12	Rods	
To other Road	18	"	
" Osgood Road	109	"	
" County Road	205	"	Mammoth Rd
" Osgood Road	255	"	
" Peter and Thomas Bowers	30	"	
" J. B. Varnums Jno Barnes House	17	"	
" Other Road	33½	"	Riverside St.

From Moses Freemans to Solomon Osgoods. Breakneck Hill Road

To Moses Freemans	14	Rods	
" Francis Hartwells	7	"	
" County Road	284	"	Mammoth Rd

From the County Road near H. C. Osgoods to the Old Meadow Road 351½ Rods

From Daniel P. Coburns to the Old Meadow Road

To School House	3	Rods	Geo. Browns barn
" Hugh Jones	38	"	
" Charles Wilsons	25	"	
" Beever River	12	"	
" Mills	3	"	Collinsville
" Zachariah Coburn Road	10	"	
" Josiah and Daniel Ames	4	"	
" widow Gideon Coburns	160½	"	Agents house
" Phineas Coburns	49	"	O. J. Coburn
" The Old Meadow Road	85	"	H. Jesse Coburns

From near John Goodhues to the Ames road near M. L. Coburns. Edmund Coburn New Boston

To Sand Hill Road	147	Rods	
" Road to Goodhues mills	17	"	Paper mills
" " near Wiseman Wallaces	76	"	Phineas St.
" Wiseman Wallaces	4	"	Otis P. Coburns
" The Ames Road	309	"	New Boston



IRA HALL

(See Page 390)

From the Road near E. F. Goodhue's to the road near Bump Hill, Sladen & Hildreth St.

To Goodhue Road	23 Rods	Dinley St.
" Simeon Flints	10 "	
" John Goodhues	25 "	Arthur Hamblett
" The Old Pelham Road	191 "	Colburn Ave.

Bump Hill to Sand Hill
To Road at Sand Hill 151 Rods Sladen St. to Lakeview Av.

From the road near Sand Hill to the Old Meadow Road — Lakeview Ave. to Phineas St.

To road to mills	47 Rods	Paper mills
S 64° E 10 to house		
S 35 E 4 " mill		
To the Old Meadow Road	38 "	Phineas St.

Wiseman Wallaces to Moses Freemans

To Daniel Goodhues	47 Rods	
" the brook	25 "	
" Old Meadow bridge	41 "	
" Osgood Road	72 "	Breakneck Hill Road

From Ames Mills through New Boston & Over Mars[h] Hill to the Road near William Richardsons.

To house belonging to Reuben Coburn	207 Rods	
" Old Meadow Road	116½ "	
" M. L. Coburns	8 "	
" Zachariah Coburns	72 "	R. D. Coburns
" Road west of the School House	17 "	
" School House	7 "	
" the Road east of the School House	4 "	Hildreth St.
" Old Meadow Road	13 "	
" Jonathan Crosbys	7 "	Crosby farm
" Old Road to Pelham	179 "	Colburn Ave.
" the New County Road	162 "	Bridge St.
" Samuel Fox's	85 "	Mrs. Eben T. Fox

To Other Road	6	Rods	
" Roger Coburns House	20	"	
" Russell Fox's	82	"	Dana R. Fox
" Nathaniel Peabodys	62	"	Bryant Farm
" Phineas Halls	70	"	Bert Cluff's
" Pelham Road	47	"	Burns Hill
" Road to B. Stevens	14	"	
" The Road	188	"	
" David Jones	45	"	
" The Other Road	83	"	Broadway

Methuen line to Col. P. Varnums			Broadway
To Thomas Lenfests	76	Rods	
" Peter Trulls	34	"	
" George Kelly 2	14	"	
" Oliver Whittiers	46½	"	
" Jonathan Parkers	52	"	
" The School House	122	"	
" B. F. Varnums Harvey House	6	"	
" Cross Road	71	"	
" Joseph Harveys	42	"	
" Jona. Parker 2	32	"	
" New Road	13	"	
" Pelham Road	64	"	
" Phineas Trulls	9	"	George R. Fox
" John Trulls	11	"	Bernice Parker
" Dea. Perleys	226	"	
" Capt Fox's	138	"	Harold Fox
" Joel Foxs S. 78. E. 13	40	"	
" Jas. Fox 2	5	"	Daigle farm
" Other Road	8	"	
" Col Varnums	123	"	Geo. D. Coburn
" Sam Richardson 2	1	"	Phineas Richardson
" The other Road	8	"	Arlington St.

Road from Jonathan Parker Jun To B. F. Varnums and from the Widow Parkers to the back road.

To The Widow Daniel Parkers	126	Rods
" The Road	8	"

To James M. Barrons	25	Rods	
" Nathan Parkers	47	"	
" The Brook	178	"	
" The Other Road	50½	"	Lawrence Rd

From Pelham Line to the road near Asa Richardsons & near Noah Stevens.

To Asa Richardson	56	Rods	
" The Road	49	"	
" Road	92	"	

From the Gilcrease place to Pelham line

To Pelham line	199 Rods	Franklin C. Wilsons to north

From the road near Moses Baileys to the road near Thomas Lenfests. E. Dracut meeting house to Broadway.

To Samuel Harris	51	Rods	
————	233½	"	Broadway

From the New Boston School House to the Old Pelham Road.

To Widow Cheevers	43	Rods	Elliot Morgan
" Joseph Durens	94	"	J. W. Peabody
" Mich Coburns	70	"	W. R. Kendall
" Old Pelham Road	75½	"	near Bump Hill

From Near David Jones' to Methuen Line.

To Noah Stevens	125	Rods	Corliss Smith
" Road near Asa Richardsons	101	"	
" Gilcrease Road	106	"	Franklin C. Wilson
" Stevens House	54	"	
" Benjamin Stevens	23	"	Edward F. Stevens
" Herrick Road	24	"	
" Abigail Mansurs	25	"	
" James Richardsons	62	"	
" Joseph Kittredge	73	"	
" Moses Baileys	33	"	
" The Harris Road	44	"	near Cemetery
" Robert Ellenwoods	31	"	Almon Richardsons

To	Road	4 Rods
"	Mansur Brook	22 "
"	James Richardson Jr.	53 "
"	Mansur Brook	27 "
"	Widow Daniel Mansurs	31 "
"	Methuen Line	20 "

From Pelham Line by A. & D. Davis to Methuen Line. From Pel.

To	Richard Thissells	12 Rods
"	& Deborah Davis	52 "
"	Samuel ———	86 "
"	Henry Austins	13 "
"	W^m^ Austin Jun	140 "
"	The Asa Harris Place	32 "
"	Tim Barkers House	81 "
"	Other Road	12 "
"	William Harveys	47 "
"	Methuen Line	32 "

From the road near Robert Ellenwoods Almon Richardsons To Pelham Line.

To	the School House	137 Rods
"	" Road	16 "
"	Thaddeus Richardsons	41 "
"	the Brook	67 "
"	Amos Morses 3	170 "
"	Joseph Gardners	101 "
"	Robert Youngs	125 "
"	Pelham Line	99 "

From Joseph Gardners to Pelham Line.

To	W^m^ Cloughs	90 Rods
"	Stephen Richardsons Lane	10 "
"	Moses Cloughs	67 "
"	Thomas Lewis	12 "
"	W^m^ Clough 3^d^	25 "
	———	81 "

Richardson Lane to Stephen Richardsons 37 Rods

The survey of the roads, if completed, is not in the record although it appears to have been the intention of the surveyors to include other roads, as the following entries state:

From James Harris to Joel Fox Jrs. This would be a part of Pleasant Street from Greenmont Avenue including Arlington Street and Broadway as far as Moses Daigles.

Old Pelham Road from near Ephraim Richardsons to Pel-Line.

From near Bradley Jones to near Samuel Worcesters and from near said Worcesters to Samuel Foxs. This was the old road from Pelham over Marsh Hill to Lowell, commencing at the Prescott Jones farm, running through Chapman St., Fox Avenue and old Marsh Hill road near the reservoir to Mrs. Eben T. Fox's.

Road laid out by the Selectmen in 1834 from near Merrill Richardsons to the County Road near the Central Bridge. This is the part of Hildreth Street from near Coburn Street to Bridge Street.

Road laid out by the County Commissioners in 1835. From near Levi Wilsons to Nathan Thissells. This is now Methuen St., the old road running over the hill by way of Tenth Street was formerly the highway to Methuen but this new one avoided the hill and was a shorter route.

Road located by the County Commissioners in 1835. From Tyngsboro line to Simeon Marshalls and from said line to near Tray Rock to the aforesaid road. This is the highway to Nashua at the north end of Tyngs Pond now Lake Mascuppic.

Survey of Long Pond beg. State line South side. This survey with angles is recorded.

Little Double Brook	
To Road	12 Rods Mammoth Road
	29½ " To Beaver Brook
Survey of Double Brook.	
To Little D(ouble) B(rook)	16 Rods
" the Road	38½ " Mammoth Rd
" Little D(ouble) B(rook)	16 "

This survey includes only so much of the brook as lies between the two points where it divides and where they unite.

Survey of Beaver River Beg. at Merrimac River.

To	Tan House Brook	123 Rods	
"	Stanleys Bridge	41 "	Navy Yard
"	Goodhues Mills	208 "	Paper Mill
"	the Old Meadow Bridge	74 "	
"	Double Brook	504 "	
"	Ames Bridge	161 "	Collinsville
"	Gumpas Brook	477 "	
"	State Line	83½ "	

The discontinuance of Bradleys Ferry and the building of Central bridge was the cause of some changes in the location of the highways. Travel was diverted from Pawtucket bridge and new routes were in demand. The change made in the location of Methuen street, as already noticed, was for the purpose of following more level land and lessening the distance as it was evident that with the cities of Lawrence and Lowell coming into existence travel between these points would be greatly increased. Sladen Street was a cart path through the woods which were private property, Broadway from Arlington to Bridge streets and Bridge street from near Tenth to Pelham line were just opened for travel. Lakeview Avenue from opposite the mills of the Lawrence Mfg. Co. to Hamblet Avenue and Dinley Street was opened later to construct the electric road to Nashua. There was great objection to building a road across the meadows. The most striking example of this is the road from Pelham to Bradley's ferry, which runs eastwardly to Burns Hill on the north side of Coburn's New Meadows and returning runs westwardly on the south side of the meadows over Marsh Hill, making a long detour which a road across the meadows would have avoided. In some cases the owners' names have been given instead of the tenants as in the case of the road over Marsh Hill where the name of Roger Coburn appears. This was an old house owned by him and occupied by tenants, his home being away a mile in distance and over the Pelham line. The original owners of the town farm buildings must have located on the

farm a long distance from the highway which would account for their not being placed directly on Broadway, the new road, Broadway, giving them later direct access to central bridge. By the opening of the County road, now Bridge Street, travel was diverted from Marsh Hill over the old road and from Hildreth Street and Colburn Avenue which was the highway over which stages ran from Boston to towns in New Hampshire.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS

Taverns.

BEFORE the introduction of the steam railroad, about 1835, the only public conveyance was the stage coach, while all merchandise was carried on wagons drawn by oxen. A semi-public conveyance was the mail carrier who on certain days delivered the mail to the post offices in country towns. The majority of travellers furnished their own carriages, but by whatever means they travelled, taverns were necessary for their accommodation. At these houses the coach horses were changed and shelter and refreshment provided for passengers and animals. The use of strong drink was considered indispensable and no tavern was fully equipped which did not provide a well-stocked bar. A hall was furnished for dances and singing schools to which the village residents resorted for recreation.

There were no cities between Boston and Concord, N. H., and the stage route led through the towns where taverns were located at convenient distances. The Durkee house near Varnum Avenue and in the vicinity of the ferry was the oldest tavern in the town. This is possible on account of its location where the first settlement was made and near the first public crossing of the river. In 1754 it was owned by Abraham Coburn, who sold it to Abraham Blood. The estate was owned by this family for 100 years and was purchased in 1855 by W. H. H. Durkee.

The Hovey Tavern is a well-known house standing at Hovey Square. Thomas Hovey came to Dracut before the Revolution and purchased a small piece of land on which stood the frame of a house. This house he finished building and four generations of Hoveys have lived here and until the present year (1919) has been in the possession of the descendants of Thomas. The shape is somewhat changed, as originally it had a long roof on the back like many houses which were built at that time.

This was removed, with an ell which was attached to the south end of the building in which the "old folks" lived. The old square chimney is retained with the large corner posts projecting into the rooms, the panelling, the crooked front stairs, the kitchen in the rear with the long fireplace and brick oven, the overhead floor beams and other features which were in accordance with the style of building in those early days. The room at the right of the front door was the bar room and as the training grounds was near it must have been a favorite place for the citizens to meet and discuss the situation when news came of the oppressive acts of the British ministry. This was on the direct highway, now Hildreth Street, for stages going to the northern towns after crossing the river at Bradleys ferry, and as the building was near the road lady passengers were served with hot tea passed from the windows, without alighting from the coach. This house is probably the one to which reference is made by John Varnum in his journal: "29 May 1777. In the forenoon attended on training & c. No Rhum, flip nor Cyder to be had at ye Tavern, the first training of that kind ever heard of in Dracutt."

At the Center near where the hose house now stands was a large building, painted yellow, but in recent years destroyed by fire. This was a tavern at one time kept by Caleb Blanchard and in 1831 it was called B. F. Varnums tavern house and later it was conducted for the same purpose by Enoch F. Goodhue. In 1860, Oliver Morse sold groceries in the ell.

Parker's tavern was on the Methuen road, now Broadway, and is known as the Worthy Parker farm, now owned by Mr. Long. In recent years changes have been made in the interior but the dance hall remains unchanged. This was a famous place in the early days of Lowell for merry parties to enjoy a sleigh ride and dance with supper furnished. The bar room furniture remained many years after it ceased to be a tavern.

Bradleys tavern still stands on First Street, nearly opposite the ferry landing. Joseph Bradley was a prominent man in the early part of the last century and owned the ferry near Central bridge. Its usefulness as a tavern ceased long ago and it is now a tenement house. If a teamster furnished his own hay and grain no charge was made for stable room. The price for

a night's lodging was eight cents for a single bed, six cents for a double bed, while a hot dinner was provided for twelve and a half cents.

Town Pounds.

The pound was a very important feature in the town and there were laws governing the action of pound keepers and field drivers. In recent years the use of the pound has been discontinued, and wherever the field driver places the cattle, the same is a legal pound while the cattle are in his possession. In 1712, "John Varnums fort" was the pound, this was the Varnum garrison house on Riverside Street. In 1716 the town voted to build two pounds, one to be located near James Richardsons which would locate it on Varnum Avenue west of the Durkee road and the other near Ephraim Hildreths which would be in the vicinity of Hovey Square.

In 1713, Edward Coburn's garrison house was declared a legal pound, meaning probably the stockade which enclosed the buildings. In 1738, Nathaniel Clement built a pound and as his home was near the state line on the Mammoth road, it was probably near there. In 1790 there is a record of a payment of five pounds to William Hildreth and two others for their services in building a pound near the house of Ephraim Hildreth. In 1783, the town voted to build a pound to be located between Dea. Thomas Hoveys and Capt. Stephen Russells. It was to be built of stone, to be thirty feet square and six feet high with a gate made of oak lumber, and to be of suitable thickness of wall with capstone. The work was probably delayed as payment was not made until two years later, when the town treasurer paid Jonathan Taylor, William Hildreth and Parker Varnum for building it. It was kept in its original condition many years after its discontinuance for its purpose as a pound, but is now in a ruinous condition, but may be seen on Pleasant Street east of Hovey Square.

In early days hogs were permitted to run at large according to a vote taken at the annual town meetings and the duties of field driver and pound keeper were of more importance than at the present time. Hog reeves were appointed at the annual town meetings.

Work House.

In 1782, the town voted "to build a house 14 ft square for the purpose of Imploying Idle Indigent persons within the town as the law directs," and Ebenezer Coburn, Parker Varnum, and Thomas Hovey were appointed a committee to build "in the cheapest manner possible and in the most convenient place." The building was erected and Capt. Stephen Russell, Dea. Amos Bradley, Parker Varnum, Thomas Hovey and Isaac Bradley were appointed wardens of the work house; and Capt. Ezekiel Hale was chosen to serve as master. The following year there was recorded the payment of certain sums of money for labor, lumber, etc., for the building. There is no record of its location as anything to show when it was discontinued. In 1831, the town purchased of Samuel F. Wood and his sister, Hannah, wife of Jonathan Crosby, the farm formerly owned by their father, William Wood, who had received this farm by will from his father, Benjamin, the original settler on this tract. It included about fifty acres and the amount paid was $1265. The only way of access to the buildings from the public highway was by a lane leading south from Arlington street now called Arlington avenue.

Previous to this time the indigent people had been boarded in private families. Upon the town books there are recorded entries of Selectmen's orders to the town treasurer similar to the following, dated 1766: "Pay to Stephen Russell for keeping Paul Wood 30 weeks and finding cloathing £2-13-0."

One of the first superintendents of the town farm was Chandler Chase, who removed to Pelham, N. H. Among the later superintendents are Henry Varnum, Gayton M. Hall, Stephen W. Wright, Harvey Barnes and others.

A stone building for the confinement of insane or refractory inmates or the temporary detention of arrested criminals was erected near the farm house. It was about 22 by 14 feet square and was provided with suitable locks on the doors and heavy bars on the windows to prevent the escape of the inmates. The interior was divided into three compartments, one occupying nearly one-half of the building and used for a lodging place for tramps and a sleeping place in warm weather for the male

inmates. One small room with window was for the detention of those who for any reason should be kept in strict confinement, while a third room was a dark cell in which would be placed the refractory.

During the Civil War there was a large number of inmates and it became necessary to make additions to the farm house. The number varied from year to year and was a source of income or expense, according to the ability of the one who managed the farm. As that part of the town became more thickly settled the land west of the farm lane became valuable for building lots and was sold.

In 1881 the proposition was made to sell the farm and purchase one in East Dracut which would be of equal value as a town farm with less investment in land value. This was defeated and in 1911 the farm was sold as there were but a few inmates and these are cared for by the town in other ways. The ledge on Willard street was sold to the City of Lowell, the ownership of the farm by the town ceased and the barn later was removed across the street.

The Water Cure.

In 1847, a medical institution was established on Sixth street, in Centralville, in a building formerly used by the Dracut academy as a boarding house for the pupils. A good description of it is found in the advertising columns of a newspaper printed in Lowell in that year: "Lowell Water Cure Establishment, Dracutt, Mass. A new Hydropathic Institution situated on the banks of the Merrimack about fifteen minutes walk from the city of Lowell, is now open for the reception of invalids. The establishment combines the advantages of proximity to a large city and a rural residence." The proprietor, Dr. Robert Darrah, states that he has "spared no pains or expense in making it one of the most comfortable, convenient and desirable locations for Hydropathic treatment now offered to the public. The home is elegantly furnished and sufficiently commodious to accommodate from 30 to 40 patients, with a good supply of pure water and a Bathing apparatus not inferior to that of any other establishment of the kind." Terms for board and treatment were from six to ten dollars per week and Dr. H. Foster was the physician

in charge. The institution was in existence for a few years, but on account of financial difficulties the property was sold in 1852 by the creditors and two years later was purchased by Fisher A. Hildreth and William P. Webster as a residence.

Purity of Elections.

The precautions taken to prevent a fraudulent election is shown by an order issued to the town when Joseph Bradley Varnum was elected to represent the district in Congress. This order was directed to 100 citizens of Dracut, including four negroes, and they were ordered to meet at the house of James Varnum on the 27th day of July, 1796, "to give their deposition touching the election of J. B. Varnum." It probably included every voter in the town. Memorials had been presented to Congress from his district impeaching his election. It was alleged that as one of the selectmen of Dracut at the time of his election he had allowed certain votes to be received and counted which were illegal, if not fraudulent. The memorials were referred to the committee on elections. Their report was a vindication of Mr. Varnum and expressed their opinion that the charges against him were wholly unfounded.

Districts.

A record of action taken at town meeting held March 6, 1780, was as follows: "The town should be divided "into 3 districts by the name of ye upper, the middle and the lower district. The upper extends as far East as the Gret Road that leads from Bradleys Ferry northward to Edward Coburns." This included all that part of the town west of a line drawn from Central Bridge, through Bridge and Hildreth streets, and follow in the highway leading to Pelham Center as far as the state line. "The middle extends from sd Road Easterly to a Town way Easterly of George Burns Dwelling house from thence running Southerly to Maj. Saml. Varnums, including sd Burns and sd Varnums." This would include Marsh Hill, Dracut Center and Centralville heights as far east as Bell Grove, formerly Varnums Landing. "The Easterly or lower Districts to extend from ye last men-

tioned way to ye Easterly line of sd Town." These districts were in charge of constables, one officer in each district. It is not known for what purpose the town was so divided or when the system was discontinued. They were not identical with the school districts but were probably created for town purposes.

Royal Masts.

The English Government reserved all straight white pine trees from 15 to 36 inches in diameter to furnish masts for the Royal navy, marking them with a broad arrow. In 1766, Gov. Wentworth of New Hampshire was appointed "Surveyor General of all his Majesty's woods in North America" for the purpose of putting into execution the acts of Parliament relating to such reservation. Every owner of land before he commenced cutting was obliged to employ a deputy surveyor to mark the trees upon his land reserved for the use of the king. For neglect the timber cut was forfeited and in this way whole mill yards of lumber got out by the settlers were often forfeited. Samuel Blodgett of Goffstown, N. H., was, in 1772, appointed deputy surveyor for 31 towns in New Hampshire and his jurisdiction extended to the towns of Haverhill, Andover, Dracut, Chelmsford and Ipswich in the Massachusetts colony. It was such acts as these which to a great extent exasperated the colonists and prepared them for resistance which finally led to the independence of the colonies and to the birth of a new nation.

Barter and Old Deeds.

In the early settlement of the town there was but a small amount of money in circulation and much of the business was done by barter and exchange of products of the farm. As no market existed nearer Dracut than Boston, fresh meat could not be obtained in hot weather, and fish, fresh and salt, smoked ham, salt pork, eggs and wild game furnished a substitute. In the winter season fresh meat could be frozen and decay prevented. Another arrangement which was made was that when a calf was killed it was parcelled out among the neighbors who in turn repaid the debt by returning the same amount when they butchered. On April 22, 1741, Joseph East, who in company with Joseph Varnum operated the nickel mine, gave a mortgage of

his farm which consisted of 100 acres. By the terms of the contract he was permitted to pay with the following articles: hemp, flax, cordage, bar iron, cast iron, linens, copper, leather, flaxseed, beeswax, bayberry wax, sail cloth, nails, tallow, lumber including shingles, staves, hoops, white pine boards, white oak plank, white oak boards, ship timber, barrel beef, barrel fish, oil, whalebone and cordwood. A large part of these articles could be furnished from the farm or received in payment of debts due him and so contribute to the discharge of the obligation.

In deeds of conveyance there was inserted much that at the present time seems superfluous. In a deed given by Walker and Hunt of the land east of Beaver Brook as far as the divisional line, near Hildreth Street, after giving the boundary lines these terms are used, "together with all and singular ye Timber, Trees, woods and underwoods, standing and growing thereon, swamps, grounds, medows, springs, waters, water courses, ways, easements, profits, priveleges, rights, liberties, benefits, advantages, commodities, hereditaments, emoluments and appurtenances."

Local Names.—Brooks.

Beaver brook is the largest stream within the limits of the town. It is the outlet of Beaver pond in Derry, N. H., and enters the town north of Collinsville, and reaches the Merrimack river between Pawtucket falls and Aiken Street bridge. It furnishes power for the factories at Collinsville and the Navy Yard village and formerly for the paper mill where the dam still remains. The brooks in their order as they flow into Merrimack river commencing at East Dracut are: Bartlett's, formerly Walker's brook; this rises in the meadows of East Dracut and is joined near the Methuen line with the brook which is the outlet of Peter's pond. Varnum's brook rises in the meadows in the southeast part of the town and enters the river near Bell Grove, formerly Varnum's Landing. Richardson's brook is formed by the junction of two brooks, Potash and Trout brooks, which rise south of Marsh and Burns hills. This brook flows into the river at Kenwood village and was called by the Indians, Pophessgosquockegg, it has also been called Coburn's and Winthrop's brook. Wilkinson's brook rises in the meadows near the town farm and its outlet was a few rods above Central Bridge, but

recently it has been turned into a sewer at Billings street and continues its course to the river underground. It has also been called Belcher's and Richardson's brook.

Another brook rose between Pleasant Street and Aiken Avenue, crossing Hildreth street north of the Hildreth cemetery. Hovey's tannery was located on this brook, which now enters a sewer at Hildreth street. Beaver Brook, already described is next in order. Cat Brook was a small brook crossing Riverside street in the hollow east of Pawtucket bridge, but now enters a sewer. Flaggy Meadow, or Marble's brook, rises near Ledge hill and enters the river near the entrance to the boulevard. Clay Pit brook rises farther west and running under Varnum Avenue near Totman Road, takes a course nearly parallel with the river, which it enters near Marble's brook. Angelica brook, west of the Navy Yard village, runs under Riverside street near the sand hill below the cemetery and enters Beaver brook. Tan House or Tan Vat brook drains the meadows near the Rifle Range and enters Beaver brook below the Navy Yard. Goodhue's brook rises in the meadows southwest of New Boston and enters Beaver brook above Meadow bridge. Double brook is the outlet of Long Pond and formerly furnished power for Varnum's gristmill above Collinsville. It runs under Mammoth road below Collinsville and enters Beaver brook. It formerly had a branch called Alewive brook. The Coburn New Meadow brook, called the Gilbert Coburn Saw mill brook, rises in the north side of Marsh Hill and crossing the state line reaches the brook in Pelham.

The principal brooks in that part of Pelham which was, previous to 1740, a part of Dracut, are Goulding's brook, north of Gage Hill, entering Beaver brook above the middle stone bridge; Gage's brook, which is the outlet of Island Pond and which runs into Goulding's brook; Tony's brook, crossing the County road south of the lower stone bridge, and Gumpus brook, which is the outlet of Gumpus Pond. West brook is near East Dracut Meeting House.

Ponds.

The only pond lying wholly in Dracut is Peters' pond with an area of 86 acres and lying in the east part of the town.



MILTON FOX

(See Page 387)

Long Pond lies in Dracut, Tyngsboro and Pelham. A part of the east side and the whole of the south end lie in Dracut. A small part of the northeast corner of Tyngs pond lies in Dracut, the larger part being in Tyngsboro.

Hills.

Poplar Hill is a hill 300 feet above the level of the sea. It is in the northeast corner of the town. It has a peculiar formation in common with many other hills, being a double hill or one which has two summits. This formation seems to be in obedience to some law which has not yet been discovered. In the hollow between the crests is the point where Pelham, N. H., Dracut and Methuen join. It was formerly known as Ayers Hill. Burns Hill and Marsh Hill are each 200 feet high and lie on the state line north of Dracut center. Loon, or more correctly Mallones Hill, lies east of Dracut Center, while Town Farm and Christian Hills, each aproximately 200 feet high, are well known hills between the Center and Merrimack River.

Christian Hill received its name from the fact that one of the former owners of some of the property was so profane and irreligious that he was called Christian John. The present name of the hill is Centralville Heights. Bump Hill is a small hill on Hildreth Street, south of New Boston village, while Winter Hill lies between this village and Marsh Hill. Tan House Hill lies between Hovey Square and Tan House brook. Huckleberry Hill or Whortleberry Hill is a double hill lying between Collinsville and Park or Mud Pond. Druid, formerly Bridget's Hill, lies north of Varnum Avenue. Ledge Hill is on the Mammoth Road and has been the quarry from which a great part of the stone for the foundation of the mills has been taken. Breakneck Hill lies between the Mammoth and Old Meadow roads and was formerly in such a condition as to be dangerous for travellers, and for this reason it received its name.

Cow Bridge Hill is crossed by Bridge Street, near the city line. In these days few cow bridges are in existence, but occasionally one may be seen in the country. When the County road, now Bridge street, was laid out, it divided a pasture into two parts. For convenience in allowing the cows to have access

to both parts of the land, a bridge was constructed in the hollow near Billings Street and thus the hill received its name.

Flag Meadow hill is a drumlin in Pawtucketville, north of Varnum avenue, on which the Lowell General Hospital now is located. Powder House hill was the high land south of Pleasant street and west of Hildreth street, and is now crossed by Orleans street. This was the training ground for the Dracut companies of Militia and a small building recently demolished was used for the storage of powder. Downshot hill is in the vicinity of Ledge hill on the Mammoth Road. Stephen Hall hill is between Marsh and Burns Hill.

Other Localities.

Totman Road in Pawtucketville was formerly called Zeal Road. Zeal was a contraction of Barzillai. In the time of the Revolution, a son of Primus Lew, viz., Barzillai, a colored man, lived on this road. His name is among those who served in the war and he was a musician, playing a fife. Blackbird swamp lies north of Hovey Square. Bear Meadow is southwest of Huckleberry hill and reference is made to it in early deeds. Bushy Meadow lies between Bear Meadow and the road leading to Nashua.

Deer Jump is in the Merrimack River, between Dracut and Tewksbury. The tradition is that Satan ran across the river by jumping from one rock to another, leaving the print of deer's hoof on each rock which may be seen providing one possesses a strong imagination. New England is a collection of houses on the east side of the hill, which lies in the angle formed by Riverside and Pleasant Streets, and near Beaver Brook. The Carpet mill and original Paper mill were located at this spot and when discontinued for manufacturing purposes, the Carpet mill buildings were changed into tenement houses, which at present writing are nearly all removed.

Collinsville was formerly Ames' mills, and later was known as Lawson's and Pearson's mills. After it became the property of the Merrimack Woolen Co., it received the name of Frogtown. New Boston is a collection of farm houses north of the Navy Yard, while Black North is in the Northeast and Kenwood in the southeast sections of the town. Bakers Island was in or near Beaver Brook and near the outlet of Tan House brook.

The Navy Yard village is on Beaver Brook, about half a mile from the Merrimac river. Various reasons have been given for its receiving its name, but the writer received the true reason from the daughter of the man who gave it the name. She was then ninety-five years old. Reference to the chapter relating to fishing rights will show that early in the last century the pond above Aiken Street bridge and below Pawtucket falls was a noted fishing ground, and the owners or lessees of those rights, after fishing, would ascend Beaver brook and moor their boats near the dam which was *below* the present one above Pleasant street. Near this dam stood a sawmill with its piles of sawed lumber and ship's knees which the farmers had brought and left on the bank ready, at high water, to be rafted to the ship yards at Newburyport. One day two men, Esquire Life Hamblet and Capt. John Burt, were at the mill and, noticing the boats and ship timber, one said to the other, "This looks like a Navy Yard." "Yes," replied the other, "and we will call it the Navy Yard."

Ships knees were formerly used to give strength to a ship, as they allowed the decks to be bolted to the sides. An oak tree would be selected and cut, leaving about three feet of the trunk standing. A root would be selected and cut about three feet from the trunk. This would, when properly trimmed, form a knee which, in the absence of framework, held the sides and decks together. These knees, with other timber suitable for ship building, would be prepared by the farmers and brought to the Navy Yard village and left on the bank of the brook below the dam, where they would be made into rafts, and when the river was of a sufficient depth to allow their passage, they would be floated down the river to Newburyport, their pilots being strong, sturdy men, carrying long oars called sweeps with which they guided the rafts to the shipyards. The men then returned to Dracut and as there was no means of conveyance they walked, carrying the sweeps on their shoulders.

Unclassified Miscellaneous.

The town abounds with evidences of the great glacial movement which occurred many centuries ago. We are ignorant of

the physical condition of the country during the centuries which followed the ice age until the time of the Indian occupancy, and of those years we have no written record. A century and a half ago Dracut was a farming town. The falls on Beaver Brook were beginning to be utilized. The Merrimack River was simply a medium of communication with Newburyport, by which lumber might be conveyed on rafts to the shipyards. The Pawtucket falls were of no benefit to the community, excepting as a fishing place which served to provide an unlimited amount of food for the early settlers. The products of the farm were of little value except what was consumed at home, as the cost of transportation to the Boston markets was almost prohibitive. But a radical change was in the near future. East Chelmsford was to become Lowell, its meadows were to be obliterated and immense brick buildings for manufacturing purposes were to take their place. New bridges across the river caused houses to be erected for the mill operatives and what a century ago was a farming district on the Dracut side of the river now supports a population sufficient for a large city.

Seven lines of electric cars now enter the territory which was once Dracut. Rural delivery, the parcel post, the telephone and the daily paper are conveniences of which the earlier generations were ignorant. The introduction of a water system, gas to illuminate the buildings and an excellent school system gives to the villages the benefit of city privileges.

The town officers are elected and all town business transacted at the annual and other meetings, where each individual has a right to be heard and government by the people is seen in its simplest form. In educational matters the town has endeavored to secure the best system, the most convenient and commodious houses and the most efficient teachers. Remembering the motto, "Education is the keystone of our liberty," liberal appropriations are made for schools and the supervision placed in the care of competent parties.

In the early years of the town's existence the duties of the town officers were comparatively easy. The selectmen were also assessors and overseers of the poor. The collector received from the farmer the amount assessed for taxes on one bill. At the present time many of those same farms are divided into house

lots, each one requiring a separate assessment and bill. The establishment of electric roads has added greatly to the duties of town officers in the relocation of highways and the laying out of new ones. The town report was printed on a single sheet of paper. It now requires a book of many pages. For the repair of roads, the town was divided into districts, each under the supervision of a road surveyor. The increasing use of the automobile has created a need of better road construction. Now many of our town, as well as the state highways, are macadamized, rounded, smoothed and oiled, thereby giving the durability required for the new vehicle. The farmers are introducing machinery with which to perform the work once accomplished by hard manual labor. Choice breeds of cattle now replace the comparatively worthless ones of earlier days. Farms which could formerly keep but a few cattle are managed with such system that large herds are now sustained on the same number of acres. As the horse superseded the slowly moving ox team, so the auto truck is fast taking the place of the horse in conveying to the market the products of the farm.

The town officers in earlier times took prompt measures to prevent undesirable people from becoming a charge upon the town. If a family moved into town, the constable would be ordered to warn them to leave within fifteen days, and the warning was recorded on the town books. This action was taken, not to oblige them to move, but to secure the town from loss in case they should demand assistance. Each member of the family was mentioned by name and sometimes several families would be warned at one time. In 1801, the citizens entered a protest against the building of a dam at Pawtucket falls. Their fishing rights were valuable and they predicted the destruction of those rights if the dam was built. Their fears proved true, as the rights were destroyed.

The town, in 1837, had the benefit of what was known as the Surplus Revenue from the state. By complying with certain conditions, the towns would receive this money which must be loaned and the interest only used. It was voted that it should be loaned to Dracut men only, and in sums of not less than one hundred or more than three hundred dollars to each individual. As the interest accumulated, it was applied to the building of

school houses and bridges. For nearly two centuries the sale and use of strong drink was considered necessary, as no building could be raised, no marriage ceremonies performed, or funeral services conducted without the providing of liquors for the occasion. One of our townsmen informed the writer that at one time when the minister was making a pastoral call, as he rode into the yard his father hurried him out of the back door and ordered him to run across the fields to the store, near the present location of the town office, to get a jug of rum, as the laws of hospitality required the production of a glass of stimulant for the reverend guest. No grocery store was complete without its barrel of New England Rum, no tavern was fully equipped unless there was a bar with its variety of liquor to suit all tastes.

About 1813, the great Washingtonian movement was commenced which in the present day is continued in the various temperance movements. In 1847, an article was inserted in the warrant, "to see if the town will prohibit the sale of ardent spirits." No record was made of the disposition of the article. Under date of April 5, 1847, it was voted, That the town "build a building for 'lobies' and other purposes." This would seem to refer to the stone building near the town farm house on the northerly side of Willard Street, used for many years as a lockup for persons arrested. Probably about this time the town office was built on the opposite side of the road. The two buildings were about the same size and built of the same material.

Before this time the town books were kept at the residences of the officers and the town has been fortunate that its records have escaped destruction by fire. Ten years later, in one end of the town office, a small room was set off in which the records were kept until the school house at the Center was transformed into an office and a modern fireproof vault was installed.

Controversies frequently arose between the Proprietors of the Locks and Canals and the town of Dracut. Individuals would often sell land in ignorance of the rights of the town which would cause trouble. At one time the Locks and Canals Company purchased land above the dam of the Varnum heirs, who gave them a warranty deed. The town claimed prior rights in a landing place and appointed a committee to investigate. This committee examined witnesses, searched records and

reported in favor of the town, viz., that the town had not relinquished its rights to the bank of the river. This was proven by a will of John Varnum bequeathing his estate to his sons, bounded south on the landing place, not on the river. They were vigilant in guarding their rights.

The people of early days are often considered as being sober and sedate, which, when occasion required, they were also ready for a picnic or dance, and the number of halls and taverns formerly in town bear witness to a spirit of sociability. An entry in a private journal kept by John Varnum, under date of January 15, 1778, records that, "About 2 of ye Clock the company viz. Hezekiah Coburn and wife, Parker Varnum and wife, Roger Ray and Hannah Brown, Henry Coburn and Samuel Richardson, Samuel Coburn and Rhoda, Jonas Varnum and Polly Parker, John Parkhurst, Isaac Parker, Abijah Hill and Bradstreet Coburn set off in three double slays to go to Billerica, went as far as Capt. Miners. Took a drink of Flip and toddy and returned through the town. Got back here about Sun setting. The Company set off for Joseph Varnums to sup there with fife and fiddle and returned home about 2 P. M."

Another entry shows the wages paid a hired man: "13 April. Settled a bargain with W^{m} Young for 6 months labor beginning this day for which I am to give him a wool home made coat, waistcoat and breeches, two shirts, 2 pare of Trowsers, 2 pare of stockings, a pare of shoes, a hat & $10 for which s^{d} W^{m} promised to labor for me for 6 mos. from this day."

References are made to Old tenor, New tenor, lawful money &c which indicate different values in the medium of exchange. In the absence of a standard of value it was difficult to ascertain the worth of paper money, as the denomination specified could not be relied upon with any accuracy. One writer says, "These names and their true significance are not understood by many at the present day. The value of this paper money was variable and uncertain and from 1741 to 1765 there appears to have been little if any metallic money used as a medium of exchange in New Hampshire. In Massachusetts, the bills of credit were issued in 1690 which were redeemed yearly until 1704 when the public necessities were so urgent as to induce the General Court to defer the payment of taxes for two years and afterwards for

thirteen years. The British parliament at length interposed and limited the postponement of taxes till 1741. In this time new emissions of paper money were sent forth expressed as Old Tenor, Middle Tenor, New Tenor first, New Tenor second. As the value of an ounce of silver advanced the value of this paper currency depreciated. In 1702 an ounce of silver brought 6s 10½d. The value steadily increased until 1740 it was worth 60 shillings while the paper money became comparatively of little value."

An entry on the town books record the price of one ox as £600 while £1400 was paid for a pair of oxen. In a private journal of John Varnum's, under date of 1781, he records "Bought James' military coat & Paid him $800 for the same. March 22. Aaron Small brought us ½ bushel of beans, asked $67 for them. Apr 4 Selectmen here, finished the great Rate for the hire of Soldiers. Our part came to about 100 Hard Dollars which, at 75 to one comes to 7500 Continental Dollars. May 2 Parker paid to me $536 which he received from Dea. Hovey for a barrel of Rhum." During the Civil War, in the year 1862, gold was at two per cent premium and advanced in 1864 to $2.50 for a paper dollar. No metal currency was in circulation. Storekeepers paid a premium for copper cents and payments for articles of value less than five cents were made by using postage stamps.

Considering the meagre education of the men who lived in town during the first century of its existence, it is surprising that the records were so well kept. A few misspelled words a profuseness in the use of capital letters, the entry of the proceedings of town meeting, followed by the entry of marks on a cow's ear or dates of birth or marriage were of minor consequence compared with the value of the record.

The citizens of the town were always ready, in time of need, with a helping hand. If through sickness or other misfortune the farmer was unable to plant his fields, to cut and cure his hay or to gather in his harvest, his neighbors would appoint a day when all could meet and the work would be finished. Such gatherings were called "having a wob."

The Fauna of Dracut

It was not difficult to clear the town of the few Indians who remained after the tribe had removed. They could be persuaded to leave by giving them blankets, kettles and trinkets. It was not so with the wild animals. Freedom from their depredation was achieved only by extinction, and this was rendered difficult on account of the dense forests which covered most of the country. All domestic animals must be securely penned or coralled, especially at night. It was no unusual occurrence for the settler to be awakened in the night by the bellowing of the cattle or the squealing of the pigs as they were carried away by a bear or wolf. The principal protection was afforded by the trusty bear dog and the flintlock gun. Wild cats made night hideous by their yells and the presence of the lynx made travel by night unsafe. Beavers lived by the brooks and their skill in constructing dams caused the meadows to be overflowed, thus preventing the growth of alders and thereby furnishing grass for the cattle; but all these wild animals have disappeared as the forests have been removed.

The mink and muskrat are still found near the streams, the woodchuck and skunk in the fields and among the growing crops, and the rabbits and squirrels are in the thickets. Deer are occasionally seen. Many species of wild birds may be seen. For game birds there are the native ruffed grouse, or "partridge," and the recently introduced pheasant. Woodcock and snipe are sometimes seen, but the quail is nearly extinct in this vicinity. The climate is unfavorable for large or poisonous snakes. In the ledges an occasional black snake or adder may be found, while the striped and green snakes live in the fields and gardens where they destroy bugs and insects.

The Flora of Dracut

The oak and pine are the principal trees, the white oak being especially valuable on account of its strength and durability, while the inferior kinds are the black, yellow and red species. The white pine is superior to other kinds as it is easily wrought into lumber and many household articles. The red

or Norway pine is rarely seen and will soon become extinct. Maple and white birch are abundant. The maple is of the red or swamp species, the rock maple will not thrive here. Swamp lands if neglected are soon covered with alders and willows whose principal value lies in their conversion into charcoal for gunpowder and other uses. The hickory, chestnut and butternut are common. The graceful elm and conical horse chestnut form a refreshing shade.

Many of our wild flowers are the enemy of the farmer. The mullen, once called the velvet plant, and considered a curiosity, springs up on new land. The milk weed with its white silky pod is a source of trouble to the farmer. The daisy, or whiteweed, and wild carrot, or Queen Anne's lace, take possession of the fields and destroy the value of the hay. The poison sumach, or dogwood as it is called, and with its relative the poison ivy, are to be found, but not in great abundance.

The soil of New England is favorable for fruits and the choicest varieties of apples are produced in the town.

Geological Features

Within the limits of the town are two principal formations of rock, granite, or gneiss, and mica schist. The former is found in Pawtucketville and some of the northern parts of the town. Some of these ledges have been quarried in former times, but are not worked at present. The mica schist underlies a large portion of the town and appears in ledges on the surface. In some places these masses have been uptilted by the movements of the earth in former ages. A ledge of this rock may be found south of Pleasant Street and crossed by Aiken and Kearsarge Avenues. Bridge Street crosses the Cowbridge hill a few rods south of the Lowell line where the rock is seen in the uptilted position as it was thrown out of the original horizontal formation and is weathered to a very dark brown.

One of the best specimens of mica schist is to be seen on Willard Street, called the Town Farm ledge, and now owned by the City of Lowell. Through the ledge runs a beautiful dyke of erruptive rock of a pinkish color composed of quartz and feldspar. A rock of similar nature to the schist called mica

slate, forms the bed of the river at Pawtucket falls and elsewhere. The continued action of the water has worn away the softer parts of the rock, leaving the harder portions exposed and uptilted at an angle from the horizontal. Pot holes are abundant in these rocks varying in size from two inches to a foot in diameter. We learn by such formations that in remote ages the bulk of the earth was greater than at present and as the mass gradually cooled, shrinkage occurred and the crust was fractured. Violent movements took place in the interior of the earth, causing the upheaval of these rock formations from their original beds.

Colored People.

Several slaves were owned in Dracut in the early days, but none are recorded in the U. S. Census of 1790, although the number of free colored people is given as 39. From records now existing we learn that they were considered as servants rather than slaves, were kindly treated, cared for in old age and given a decent burial. They were loyal to those who owned them and patriotic when their country was in need of defendants.

One of the earliest colored families in town was that of Anthony Negro, also called Tony. He came to Dracut from Concord, Mass., with Sary, his wife, and several children, between 1712 and 1716. The Concord records give his name as Antoner. The committee appointed to allot the Reserved land, evidently considered him worthy to share with the white citizens, and several lots of land were set off to him in various portions of the town. The eleventh lot on the river was granted to him, which he exchanged in 1719 with Ezekiel Cheever for 30 pounds and 50 acres of land near the Haverhill path, which is supposed to be the road north of the Dracut reservoir, now discontinued, and which led through East Dracut, which at that time joined Haverhill, now Methuen. South of this road on land formerly owned by Franklin C. Wilson, and southwest of the present buildings, there is an old cellar with a well near it. Its present appearance indicates its age, as the elements have nearly obliterated it and like many other cellars, it is away from any highway and was probably reached only by a path through the woods.

Reasoning from the fact of its age and that a large part of Anthony's land was in this vicinity, it was probably his home. Several deeds on record show the disposal of tracts of land allotted to him around Cedar pond, on Marsh Hill and over the line in what is now Pelham. Tony brook in Pelham received its name from him. After his death, which occurred June 10, 1741, his will was probated naming Josiah Richardson as executor. The children mentioned in the will are Joseph, Robert, Peggy, Hannah, Sarah, David, Jonathan and Peter. Dracut records give the birth of Jonathan, August 8, 1721, Margaret, August 27, 1716, Robert, April 15, 1718. No further trace of the children can be found, and if there are any of his descendants in this vicinity they must have assumed a different name, as the only surname known by which they were called was "Negro." District No. 11 in the northeast part of the town is called "Black North," and from the fact of his owning so much land in this section it was so called on this account, as proof exists that this was the reason why it was given this name.

The Lew family were in Dracut about 1745, coming from Groton. The records of that town have the following entry dated December 28, 1742: "Priamus (Capt Boydens negro servant) to Margt. Molatto formerly servant to Saml Scripture, both of Groton." Priamus served in the French and Indian war of 1745 as a musician. His son, Barzillai, born in Groton November 5, 1743, died in Dracut January 18, 1822. He married Dorcas Brister. He was early in the Revolution, enlisting in Capt. John Fords Company in Col. Bridges Regiment, and was present at the battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775. He was employed as a fifer. Barzillai and Dorcas had several children, among them Zimri, who married Mahala Freeman, and their son, Adrastus, who married Elizabeth Freeman, is remembered as a resident of Dracut, and who inherited from his ancestors skill as a musician and whose children now living in Lowell also possess this gift. The home of Barzillai has been mentioned as located on Totman road where he owned a farm. An entry in a journal written a century and a quarter ago gives this information: "4 March 1779 One Stephen Hartwell here to advise relating to a Neagro named Jeffery Hartwell, Spent considerable time with him at his request relating to said Neagro's freedom. He

would have given me a fee. I refused to take one (in a Neagro Cause)'' Jeffery died July 22 1816. The vital records of the town give the death of Jesse Hartwell as occurring July 20, 1816, aged, 75 years. The similarity of the names and the dates of deaths of these two men lead to the conclusion that they were identical.

Jess married Maria—and they were the parents of Violet, called Vilot, and Frances, who will be remembered by the older residents of the Navy Yard village, and who possessed to a great degree cheerful dispositions and marked intelligence. Maria, their mother, was employed for many years by Joseph Butterfield Varnum, who at her marriage, presented her with some land at the corner of Breakneck Hill Road and Meadow Road on which they built a house and where the two daughters mentioned made their home.

In 1779 the town records state that ''John Varnum notified the town that he had received a laborer, a negro, who calls himself Jeffrey Freeman about twenty eight years old from Joseph Hartwell in Bedford s^{d} Jefferey appears to be an able bodied laboring man and says he expects to earn his living at husbandry work'' This may have been the Jeffery Hartwell before mentioned as the colored people assumed the name of the people with whom they lived, having no family names of their own.

The town records of Bedford contain an article relating to Jefferey Hartwell. It is dated July 6, 1756: ''Know all men by these presents that I, Joseph Fitch of Bedford in the County of Middlesex, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in New England, gentleman for and in consideration of the sum of £24 lawful money of New England, done, in hand paid at and before the sealing and delivering of these presents, by Joseph Hartwell of Bedford, above said yeoman, the receipt I do hereby acknowledge, have bargained and sold and by these presents do bargain and sell unto the said Joseph Hartwell a negro boy about 5 years old, called Jeffru, now living at the said Joseph Hartwells, to have and to hold the said negro boy by these presents bargained and sold unto the said Joseph Hartwell, his executors, administrators and assigns forever, and I the said Joseph Fitch for myself etc do warrant the above said Nego boy

unto the said Joseph Hartwell, his heirs etc against me the said Joseph Fitch my heirs etc, all and every other person and persons whatsoever, shall and will warrant and defend by these presents of which negro boy I, the said Joseph Fitch have put the said Joseph Hartwell in full possession by delivering said negro at the sealing hereof unto the said Joseph Hartwell''

The marriage of Moses Freeman of Newton and Dinah Lew of Dracut is recorded as occurring October 7, 1808, also the birth of nine children. Dinah was a slave and at the time of her death, which occurred about 1870, she was blind and cared for by her children. Their home was on Meadow road, south of the bridge where the cellar may be seen.

The Dracut vital records give the names of their children as follows:

Rufus Lew	born	May 11 1810 in Cambridge
Derinder	"	June 3 1812
Moses	"	Aug 23 1814
Peter Lew	"	May 2 1816
Thomas	"	March 18 1818
Osmore Lew	"	Jan 18 1820
Lucy	"	Mar 23 1822
Barzillai	"	Feb 29 1824
Edgar	"	Jan 1 1826

In the absence of name of birthplace it is probable that all of these except Rufus, were born in Dracut. Rufus married April 24, 1849, Elizabeth Williams of Charlestown. In his later years he became nearly helpless on account of rheumatism, but he was very intelligent and had an active mind which caused him to be respected in the community. The other children, except Lucy, who cared for the mother in her old age, found homes in other towns.

Silas Royal, or according to the pronounciation of those days, Ryal, was a servant in the household of General J. B. Varnum, and it is stated that he was purchased in Boston when an infant and brought to Dracut. In January, 1776, he enlisted in Capt. John Reed's Company, Col. James Varnum's Regiment, and after serving for a time he entered the Navy as a privateersman. His name is on the Roll of Honor of Dracut Sol-

diers, where he is recorded as serving on the Privateer "Franklin." In 1778 he was kidnapped by speculators and taken to Boston, where they intended to send him South to be sold. When his absence was known, the Varnum family hurried to his assistance and proved to the authorities that he was a free man. He was a man who possessed dignity of manner and was respected and trusted by the family with whom he lived. "He was exceedingly punctilious as to respect he felt due him as Gen. Varnum's servant. If any of the young men failed to take off their hats to him when they met him on the road, he would cry out, 'Boys, where's your manners?' and failing recognition, would send his cane after them in double quick time."

"Ryal as he was called was the body servant of Gen. Varnum and accompanied him in his military expeditions. He was early manumitted and served as a privateersman, at one time of the Revolutionary War on board the brig 'Franklin,' Joseph Robinson, commander, at Salem, and drew £30 as his share of prize money. He was held in respect by everybody, as he was a dignified old darkey with autocratic ways. That he was an honored servant is shown by the fact that, though old and diseased, he was tenderly cared for and had a room in the family mansion. He died several years after Gen. Varnum on May 3 1826 and, at his own request, was buried beside an Indian in one corner of the Varnum burial ground at the Varnum homestead."

In an old diary preserved in the Varnum family an account of the kidnapping of Royal is found:

"Jan 19 1778—This morning while at breakfast heard that Joshua Wyman had sold Ryal Varnum, that ye News was brought from Westford by Jos. Varnum Jr. & that said Ryal was carried off in a covered waggon. Handcuffed—on hearing of which I immediately called for my horse, Galloped to Jos. Varnums to Know ye Certainty. He confirmed it. Sent him to Capt. Jo's to come Immediately and Joyne in ye pursuit to Relieve sd Royal. He came Immediately. Sent Jonas with my horse. Gave Jonas $20 to bare his expenses, with orders to pursue with all possible speed, overtake, Bring back and not suffer such arbitrary voyalance to Escape with Impunity. They

pursued, came to Woburn, found the News confirmed. That it was the Infamous Joner White, the Scurrilous Tinker of Haverhill, that Bought him (at ye same time knowing sd Ryal was a free man) sd White had Imprisoned him, Woburn people had liberated him. Sd White laid a false charge against him. Said he was an Inlisted soldier in ye Continental service: that he had received $20 Continental money & had Deserted, that he had stole from Sundry persons & was a thief & that if ye prison Could not hold him ye Guard should & profanely swore that he had bought him & would have him some way on that Complaint. Altho he knew it to be false he put him under guard. There is ye Infamous White that hath worked himself by some means as some way to be a quartermaster for ye Army at or near Boston, a fine post to get money when Truth Nor Honor is not regarded.

Jan 20. Capt Joseph & Jonas Varnum went to Boston, Complained to General Heath against said White, had sd Ryal Liberated, and a promise from the Genl. that he would take Notice of said White. They gave sd White Just Character to ye General, he promissed he would take Notice of it. They went to White, Informed him what they had done. He was extreamly angry. Curst & swore very profanely. They delt with him very sharply for his Conduct to Ryal. He said he did not know that Ryal was free. They told him that he Did not know that his Crime aledged against Ryal, for which he was put under gaol was true, but that he knew ye contrary. He said that all such Neagrows ought to be slaves. They told him that Ryal was as Good a man & of as much Honor as he, at which he was extremely angry & profain. Laid his hand on his Hanger by his side. They told him they had seen Hangers & men before they had seen him or his, that they were Ready to answer him any way he pleased, that they on sd Ryal Behalf, should Bring an action of Damage for false Imprisonment, that such men stealers should not go unpunished. They came to Wymans same Day. Gave him ye like Trimming."

By this it appears that the seizure and imprisonment was in pursuance of a conspiracy to ship him south and sell him as a slave.



VARNUM GARRISON HOUSE

(See Page 55)

"I, John White solemnly declare that I purchased a Negro named Royal of one Joshua Wyman of Woburn in the County of Middlesex, State of Massachusetts Bay, sometime the last of spring or beginning of summer 1778, for which I paid nine fifty six pounds lawful money, sd Wyman declaring to me on his word of honor that if I would sell the sd Royal to some other Southern Officer, so that he might never again return to New England, he would give me some consideration therefor (as he said on account of his infamous character as a thief &c) and that the said Wyman still retains the money from me that I gave him for said Negro, alledging that he is my slave for life and that it is my fault that I do not make him so. This I solemnly protest to be the truth.

JOHN WHITE

Newburyport Sept 28 1779."

There is in evidence this further paper, showing that proceedings were commenced against said Wyman, being instructions to Ryal from his counsel Gen. James Mitchell Varnum of Rhode Island, the brother of Capt. Joseph Bradley Varnum, bearing the title, viz.:

"Instructions to Silas Royal in his action vs. Joshua Wyman to be brought before the Octo term of the Superior Court in the County of Bristol Oct. 1779.

1. Take Deposition to prove the Bill of Sale to White.

2. Take Deposition to prove that Wyman has confessed that he made such a Bill of Sale, that he was sorry for what he had done &c.

3. Make Depst to prove your confinement in irons &c. That Wyman was knowing to it, and that White intended carrying you to South Carolina as a slave.

4 Find out if possible who were witnesses to Bill of Sale & take their Deposition.

5 Take Deposition to prove if Wyman intermedalled in the affare of your Release and endeavored to have those prosecuted who Released you. Let the witnesses ascertain as near as they can thee date of the Bill of Sale.

6 Get a copy of ye whole case at ye Superior court when your Freedom was declared. J. M. VARNUM

P. S. Desire ye Justices of peace to be particular in their captions viz. A plea of Trespas whereof Silas Royal is Pt & Joshua Wyman Deft, defending before ye Superior Court at Taunton in Oct 1779.

N. B. Follow your Instructions Exactly without minding other peoples nonsense.

J. M. VARNUM''

The animus of this abduction of said Ryal appears from a transcript of Middlesex county court of common pleas records, second Tuesday of Sept A. D. 1777 in an appealed case, ''Joshua Wyman vs. Silas Royal.'' ''The parties now appear and the Case after a full hearing was committed to a jury & were according to Law to try the same, who returned their verdict therein on Oath, that is to say they find the said Wyman promised in manner & form set forth in the writ & assess Damage at One Hundred Pounds. It is therefore Considered by the Court that the said Silas Royal recover against the said Joshua Wyman One Hundred Pounds Lawful money.''

His faithfulness in service was appreciated by Gen. Varnum and provision made for his care in his will. ''My will is that Silas Royal, a black man, who has been for a long time supported by me, free from expense to himself or the Town, be comfortably supported through life, and honorably buried after death, at the expence of my Estate, provided, the small property which he has been indulged in the possession of shall not be transferred to any person but my residuary legatees.''

Another colored soldier was Smith Coburn, ''Servant of Mr. Robert Coburn,'' who married Peg Connor, ''Servant of Mrs. Deborah Coburn.'' His marriage occured July 10, 1776. His name is on the Roll of Honor, as he was present at the seige of Boston. They lived on the Fowler road, a few rods from the highway leading to Nashua, where the cellar may be seen. Timothy Coburn, Sr., purchased in Boston two colored children and as he journeyed on horseback, he brought them in his saddle bags. The little boy lost his life by falling from the bag, but the little girl arrived safely and continued through life a member of the family. She was very faithful and devoted to the interests of the family. As she had no surname,

she was known as Dinah Tim. As she cared for the little ones of the family and was faithful in her duties, when old and infirm she received the care and attention that she had earned and to which she was entitled. She was supposed to be about 100 years old as that period nearly elapsed between the time when she was purchased and her death.

In the History and Genealogy of the Colburn—Coburn families we find the following notice: "Naturally her reasoning powers were limited. When quite old and unable to work, the daughters of the family were one day preparing to weave some checked cloth for aprons. Dinah requested them to weave some for her. Upon inquiry as to the use she could make of it, she said she wanted it to use when she picked beans. 'But where,' they said, 'will you pick beans?' 'In Heaven,' she answered. At another time she was seen sticking pine needles in the ground, giving as a reason that they would grow and be pine trees. Upon Mr. Coburn's telling her that they would not grow she said, 'Have faith sonny, have faith'."

In the list of colored men who served in the Revolution and delivered firelocks, may be found the names of Smith Coburn and Sampson Coburn, who were colored men. On the Roll of Honor the names of Chester Parker and Tony Clark appear, members of this same race.

The reason for calling the northeast portion of the town Black North has, until lately, been obscure. We now learn that a colored man, named Black North, resided there and lies buried in the vicinity. As already stated, the negroes had no names except what people chose to give them, as for example, Anthony Negro, Smith Coburn, Dinah Tim and Cambridge Moor. The name does not appear in the vital records of the town but there are people living who recall, when children, hearing those who knew him relating facts about his life. It is probable that he had a family, as we learn that if the children were not inclined to obey him he would catch them by the hair and lift them from the floor and holding them at arms' length, he would say, "Now will you mind me?"

A colored man, called Cambridge, lived on Marsh Hill. His house stood at the corner of the old Proprietors road and the present highway near the reservoir. The well is still in

existence but all traces of the house have disappeared. In one place in the records he is called Cambridge Blackman, in the same manner as Anthony is called Anthony Negro. The colored people were called "blackamoors" from the Moors of Spain, and this leads to the supposition that this may have been the one whose name appears on the Roll of Honor as Cambridge More. He served in a Bedford Company as one selected to meet a call for men by act of December 2, 1780. The record on the Bedford town books is, "Capt John Moore, chairman, provided a negro called Cambridge Moore (servant of the above) and agreed to give him as bounty 20 head of cattle, 3 years old, in case he continued in the service three years."

Major Ephraim Hildreth had a negro boy named Cuffe and directed at his death that Cuffe should be sold with other property to pay debts and funeral charges. In the inventory he was valued at 100 lbs. In the inventory of Col. Joseph Varnum's estate there was entered, "A Negro man servant name Cuff, 320 pounds, A Negro servant named Pegg 230 pounds." Cuff is said to have been a very bright darkey and unusually shrewd. One day his master, the Colonel, got into a discussion about some matter with a neighbor, while Cuff stood by listening with interest. Cuff gave some peculiar sort of a grunt after the neighbor had made some assertion, at which the man became very indignant. "Do you think I am lying?" he asked. "No, Massa, I dossent say as I does but you talk mighty like I does when I isnt speaking de troof."

The neighborhood of the Varnum garrison house was called Cuff's parish. Rev. Thomas Parker owned or employed a colored man named Caesar. A spring of water near Varnum avenue supposed to have been discovered by him is called Caesar's Spring. Col. Ansant employed two colored servants, one named Scip. In the vital records there is a record of a marriage between Scippio Coburn and Silvia Hill [negroes] dated December 13, 1792.

These are the names of only a few of the colored people who lived in the town as many of them are forgotten, but the records of those who are known are creditable to the race. The graves of some of these people are in the old cemetery, between

Varnum avenue and the river on the west side of the path opposite the burial place of the white people.

Remarkable Atmospheric Phenomenon

New Enland has experienced extreme cold weather in the past centuries, which at times has caused a failure of the growing crops and consequent hardship to the inhabitants. In common with other towns, Dracut has been visited by its periods of extreme heat and extreme cold. In an old account book in Dracut museum there is a record of such a cold season. "May 4 A Cold Storm beegins About Noon with Rain and turns to Snow before Night Snows all night and ye Next Day. While noon the Snow was about Five inches Deep then turns to rain a Little while Then Snow mixt Snow and Rain while Night Next Day May 5" Fair Weather No. East Wind Snow Lies all Day till night in Some Places Next Day May 7 in the morning Very Cold and a Great frost. This in the year 1761". The same winter records heavy frosts in May, June and September of the same year.

Poverty Year, 1816

The remarkably cold year of this date has given to history the name of "Poverty Year." Corn was planted as usual, but could only be used by cutting the stalks early and feeding to the cattle. There were frosts every month and snow every month, except July and August. In September the corn froze to the center of the cob and apples froze on the trees. The following winter must have been one of great hardship and suffering for the families as there were no facilities for transportation as at present.

The Dark Day of 1790

The nineteenth day of May, 1790, will be long remembered as "The Dark Day." A record was made by Professor Williams of Cambridge University. "This extraordinary darkness came on between the hours of 10 and 11 A. M. and continued until the middle of the next night. It was so great that people were unable to read common print, determine the time of day by

clocks or watches, dine, or manage their domestic concern without light of candles. The prospect was extremely dull and gloomy. Candles were lighted in the houses the birds disappeared and became silent; the fowls retired to roost; the cocks crowed as at daybreak; objects could not be distinguished except at a very little distance ;and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night. The color of objects was worthy of remark. The complexion of the clouds was compounded of a faint red, yellow and brown; objects which commonly appear green, were of the deepest green, verging to blue, and those which appear white, were highly tinged with yellow. Almost every object appeared to be tinged with yellow, rather than with any other color. Objects appeared to cast a shade in every direction and there were several coruscations in the atmosphere, not unlike the aurora bourealis, but no uncommon appearances of the electric fire. The darkness extended all over the New England States. To the westward it extended to the farthest part of Connecticut and Albany; to the southward all along the sea coast; and to the northward as far as our settlement extended."

This occurred in the days of our great grand parents and the oral traditions related by fathers to sons of the occurrences of the day do not differ substantially from Prof. Williams' record. They add that the cows came from the pasture thinking that it was milking time. Various reasons have been suggested as solutions of the mystery. One statement has been made that it was caused by burning forests, but this is hardly possible as none of the records of the time allude to any odor of smoke or to the existence of forest fires of a magnitude sufficient to cause such widespread darkness.

The Yellow Day

September 6, 1881, will be long remembered for the condition of the atmosphere which caused everything to assume a yellow color. Trees, grass, cattle, buildings and individuals were apparently yellow. This peculiar condition existed throughout New England. It was necessary to use artificial light through the day, bats and owls came out, frogs croaked and crickets

chirped. At the noon hour the darkness, which had commenced in the morning, increased in density and to those who were inclined to be superstitious the condition was frightful. Gas lights burning in stores and offices shone as white and clear as electric lights. At half past three the wind changed towards the west and the sky, after passing through various shades of yellow, assumed the appearance of a cloudy day. At the time of the dark day of 1790 the conditions of the upper atmosphere were not understood, but in 1881 scientific men had studied these problems. A writer in a Boston paper says: "There is now existing in the upper atmosphere a very light fog of so slight a density, in fact, that the sun's rays are hardly able to penetrate or rather to filter through it. Sulphuric matter existing in considerable quantity is found in the composition of this mist and we see at once an explanation of the peculiar saffron tinge which pervaded the atmosphere." A preponderance of certain elements which compose the white light would easily produce this condition, but it would not be likely to occur more than once in a life time.

The Presentation of Col. Ansart's Portrait

The Historical Committee meeting of the Molly Varnum Chapter, D. A. R., was held at the town library building February 20, 1906. After transacting some routine business and presentation of historical essays by members of the committee, Mrs. C. D. Palmer, after referring to Col. Ansart's services in the Revolution as recorded in another chapter, presented to the library a framed portrait of Col. Ansart. This was accepted on behalf of the board of trustees and the town of Dracut by Silas R. Coburn, who at that time was Secretary of the Board of Trustees. After the presentation there was an adjournment to the vestry, where refreshments were served followed by toasts and addresses bearing upon the history of the town.

Presentation of a Register of the Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolution.

The Molly Varnum Chapter, D. A. R. has taken a deep interest in historical matters relating to the town of Dracut and

expressed a wish to present a memorial containing the names of the soldiers of the Revolution who went from Dracut. In fulfilment of this desire the members of the Chapter and the towns people met at the library and the memorial was presented to the town. It is a register of the 439 men, printed in Old English letters, beautifully illuminated. The work of preparing the names was executed by Ross Turner of Boston, a celebrated artist. Each page has a border of vines, flowers or fruit, and it is embellished with shields, flags, etc., on its pages. The binding is of beautiful green embossed leather, and it is kept in the library in a glass case, also presented by the chapter. Mr. Turner, the artist, was present and explained the work was prepared by him and his assistants.

The presentation on behalf of the Chapter was made by Mrs. M. H. Thompson, Chairman of the Dracut Library Memorial Committee, and was accepted by Calvin Richardson, who represented the trustees of the library. At the close of the presentation exercises, Mrs. C. D. Palmer and Mrs. Thomas Nesmith, members of the Chapter, presented a deed of a strip of land lying on the west of the town lot which gives access to a new street which had just been opened. A collation was served in the Chapel of the Centre Meeting House, after which addresses were made by the officers and members of the Chapter and papers read by ladies resident in the town. The exercises were in charge of Mrs. M. H. Thompson, who was toastmistress of the occasion. She called attention to the fact that all of the addresses were to be by women.

The first toast was, "Dracut—Historic Dracut. May her boundaries never grow less; may her sons and daughters still love and protect her, her adopted children bring her long life, riches and honor, so that generations to come may point to her with pride." Mrs. Arthur Hamblett responded, referring to the hearty response to the call to serve in the Revolution and other wars.

The second toast was, "Our Chapter, God bless Her." Response by Mrs. Thomas Nesmith, one of the ex-regents, who gave as one of the reasons why the Chapter was interested in Dracut, that Molly Varnum, for whom the Chapter was named, was in her lifetime a resident of the town. She also gave praise

to Ross Turner for his work in designing and ornamenting the memorial.

The next toast was, "Massachusetts and the Daughters of the American Revolution. May they all live long and prosper," and the response was by Mrs. Charles H. Masury of Danvers, State Regent of the D. A. R. Her remarks were in praise of Massachusetts and she asked, "How can there be anything grander or greater than our old State?"

"The Dracut Soldiers of the Revolution." Response by Mrs. C. D. Palmer, who, in response to the rest of the toast, which was "May we emulate his faith in God, his sturdy sense of duty, and his sturdy independence," said, "Material for a score of historical romances is to be found in Revolutionary Dracut," and referred to the large number of men who responded to the call for its defence.

"The women of Dracut, those who know them best love them best." Response by Mrs. Calvin Richardson, who spoke of the hardships endured by the women in the days when the men were fighting for our liberties.

The next toast was, "Stones of Dracut." Response by Mrs. Charles Griffin, who called attention to the earlier days of John Eliot and Wannalancet.

"France in the Revolution." The response was appropriately given by Mrs. Charles M. Williams, a direct descendant of one of the soldiers who came from France with Lafayette. She referred to the support given to the American people by the people of France and placed the names of Lafayette and Rochambeau as worthy of a place beside the name of Washington.

"The Dracut Library. May its friends, its books and its money multiply exceedingly." Response by Miss Rose E. Peabody, who gave a historical account of its foundation and growth and gave credit to the Molly Varnum Chapter for the valuable assistance rendered in many ways in the past.

Remarks were made by Mrs. G. C. Brock on the future of the D. A. R., followed by remarks on "The Cultivation of True Patriotism," by Mrs. Donald McLean of New York. Among other interesting things, Mrs McLean referred to Dracut's remarkable record in the Revolution.

The exercises closed with the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" by Mrs. Williams.

Dracut Men as Gold Hunters

Until the year 1848, the present State of California was inhabited by Indians, Mexicans and Spaniards. Its resources, mineral and agricultural, were unknown and unsuspected. A small number of Americans were to be found there, among them a Swede, named John A. Sutter, who built a saw mill near the base of the Sierra Nevada mountains. To superintend its construction, he employed James Marshall, who, while digging a channel for the flow of the water, discovered shining particles which proved to be gold. "The village of San Francisco went wild over the discovery. Many sold all their possessions and hastened to the gold fields. All other business came to a standstill. The judge abandoned the bench, and the physician his patients, the town council was broken up for want of a quorum, farms were left tenantless and waving fields of grain were allowed to run to waste." (Bancroft's History.) The gold fever spread rapidly through the country, every state had its representatives in the gold regions wielding the pickax or shovel, or rocking the cradle which separated the rich metal from the gravel. The country was settled only as far west as the Mississippi river, and from that point to the Pacific coast there were deserts, rivers and ranges of mountains which must be crossed while savage Indians, rattlesnakes and wild beasts must be met and overcome.

The journey could be made in three different ways, overland, by way of the Isthmus of Panama, or around Cape Horn, which is the most southern point of South America, or across the Continent. The Dracut men journeyed by whichever route presented to their minds the greatest advantages. The journey by way of the Cape must be made in a sailing vessel which, owing to the calms and contrary winds, must be long and tedious.

The route by the Isthmus would not require the long journey to the Cape and the return north on the west side of the continent, but the difficulties of the crossing of the Isthmus were many. Mules must be purchased and guides hired. Pro-

vision must be made for crossing rivers and lakes, poisonous reptiles and insects abounded, while the marshy country, with its poisonous air, produced malarial fevers. No dependence could be placed on the arrival of vessels at the termination of the overland journey, and perhaps weeks would elapse before a ship arrived to convey them north to the California coast.

Those who preferred the overland route across the continent also had their share of danger and hardships. Large parties were organized for mutual protection and economy. Leaving some central point, they proceeded by rail to New York state, then by the Erie Canal and steam roads to the Mississippi river. Mules and horses were purchased and broken for the saddle and for wagons, which could be used in crossing the prairies, but as they proceeded, reaching the mountains, the journey must be made afoot, using the mules as pack animals. Parties leaving Boston in the month of April would reach their destination in November. The route chosen would be the one which would be followed having the fewest natural obstructions without regard to distance. The wagons would be used as long as possible, at times crossing mountains where, in descending the slopes, it became necessary to attach ropes to the axle and passing them around a tree the speed of descent could be governed.

As a journey of this description was one in which the majority of the travellers had not any experience, they did not realize what was needed for such an undertaking. Consequently, on leaving civilization they were encumbered with many articles which, while needed, became a burden and the route would be strewn with cooking stoves, mining tools, trunks, water filters for filtering the alkali water in the deserts through which they must pass, and household furniture. The skeletons of horses and mules marked the route, also the graves of those whose strength failed them and who were buried far from home and friends. Some would become appalled at the dangers and difficulties of a two thousand mile journey through the wilderness and return to the states. The overland route, starting near Kansas City at Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri River, crossed the Blue River, continuing through Nebraska, Wyoming, Salt Lake City, Utah, across Bear River to Winne-

mueca on the Humboldt River, then through Nevada across the south end of Goose Lake and down Pitt River to Sacramento.

No record has been kept of the Dracut men who were in these expeditions, but that the town was represented we gather from the following names: Ephraim Peabody from East Dracut who was killed in a mine; George Eastman, Benjamin Parker, Coffran Nutting, Nathaniel Stickney Jr, Justus Richardson, Ephraim Peabody from Navy Yard Village, Ezra Foster, George Kelly, Austin W. Pinney.

The gold fields of Australia also attracted Dracut men, and in 1853 six members of the Coburn family, viz., Horace, Edmund, Gates, Arad, Newton and Jackson, the last named was killed by the Australian savages, journeyed by sailing vessels to that country in search of gold. Gates married while living there and died September 18, 1868, leaving a family. Horace never married, but died there while Jackson was massacred as already mentioned. The others returned to this country.

Instances of Longevity in Dracut Families

Until the first quarter of the last century had passed into history, large families were the rule and there was not the incentive to leave the town for other localities, which existed later as manufacturing places increased and railroads came into existence. Thus some of the families in Dracut have been enabled to reach old age by engaging in farm work thus living near to nature and not indulging in those habits of mind and body which so often tend to premature old age.

Prominent among these may be mentioned the sons and daughters of Obadiah Richardson and his wife Hannah Hildreth, whose early home previous to her marriage was in "Metheuing." These were Obadiah, Jr., born 1776; Sarah, born 1782, married Isaac Coburn; Hannah, born 1785, married Ephraim Richardson; Clarissa, born 1787, married Amos Boynton; Lydia, born 1789, married Col. Prescott Varnum; Merrill, born 1791, married Mucy Wood; Sophia, born 1793, married William Foster; Elizabeth, born 1797, married Asa Parker; Charlotte born 1799, married Dea. Reuben Coburn. All of the above named arrived at an advanced age, Charlotte and Merrill pass-

ing away at about 75 years of age; Sarah and Lydia at about 94, and the others all reaching the age of 80. They all lived in Dracut or the immediate vicinity and, excepting Charlotte, at their death left numerous descendants.

The sketch of the Hamblet family records the marriage of John Hamblet and Elizabeth Perham. Their family consisted of sons, viz.: John, who resided in Maine and who died aged about 90; Thaddeus, born 1772, died in 1845, aged 73; Peter, born 1775, died at 71 years of age; Life, born 1780, died in 1874, aged 94; and Theodore, born 1792, at his death was about 80 years of age. These men, born of good old New England stock, leading active lives and temperate in their habits, were enabled to live beyond the years usually allotted to man.

The Hovey family may be included in those who are especially mentioned under the heading of this article. Their history may be found in the genealogical sketches and need not be repeated. Reference has been made to the sons of James P. and Rebecca Hovey. William lived in Lowell and was 90 years old at the time of his death. Horatio Nelson lived at East Cambridge and reached the age of 92. Joshua, who was a partner of his brother William, also lived to the age of 92. Cyrus was a silversmith in Lowell and died when 77 years of age. George inherited the Hovey homestead at Hovey square, where he died at the age of 94. These brothers were born in Dracut and their lives were spent within the limits of the town as originally laid out, but, by annexation Joshua, William and Cyrus in their later years lived in Lowell. The Hovey house built by their grandfather, Thomas, is still standing and in the days of stage coaches was on the highway over which stages travelled from Boston to Concord, N. H. It was known as Hovey's tavern and flip and hot tea was provided for the travellers, the coaches being driven near the windows where the beverage was passed to the occupants of the vehicle, thus rendering it unnecessary for them to alight. The first U. S. Mail to Dracut was delivered at this house.

The town has produced two individuals who are now (1922) still living and who have attained the rare honor of being centenarians. Clarissa Polly, second child of Ezra and Sarah (Holland) Foster, was born at Bolton, Canada, Janu-

ary 8, 1820. She left Canada when 17 years of age to come to the States to work. Her father's family at this time resided in Lowell and she continued for four years to work in the Lowell mills, working 14 hours each day. The family then removed to the Varnum Garrison house on Riverside St., then the highway to Pawtucket Bridge. The Nesmith brothers had established a small flannel mill at the Navy Yard Village, and she found employment here as a weaver. About 1838 her father purchased a farm at New Boston village, where he spent the remainder of his life, cared for in his old age by his daughter, Clarissa, and her husband, Horace Smith, a carpenter by trade whom she married in 1853. She is a member of a long-lived family. Her grandfather, Foster, was a soldier in the Revolution, and died in his 95th year. Her father and mother reached the age of 88. Her sister, Mrs. Banfill, was 95. Another sister, Mrs. Flynn, and her brother, Ezra, were over 80 at their death.

Adeline Parker, daughter of Butterfield, and Mary (Templeton) Coburn, was born February 23, 1819, in Dracut. She was an operative in the mills of the town and in Lowell, and her home was here until her marriage with John Denning of St. Louis, Mo. She was one of nine children, all excepting two, being aged at the time of their death. Her mother, who died in 1869, was 87 years old. Her home was at St. Louis, where she has resided since her marriage. She died June 18, 1920, aged 101 years.

Fast Days and Thanksgivings

The early settlers of the Colony were deeply impressed with the thought of dependence on the Maker of the Universe and their public acts were performed with this fact always governing them. They came here to escape religious oppression, not political tyranny, for they were loyal subjects to the King of England for a century and a half after their arrival in 1620. Their object was to establish a church where each one could worship according to the promptings of their conscience. It is not the duty of the writer to record the success or failure of the object which led them to cross the ocean and commence life anew in a strange country, which until this time was a

wilderness. Their first buildings were for protection and shelter, their mills for the conversion of grain into meal and flour, and then their next duty was to build a house of worship and to provide plenty of rum and molasses to cheer the workmen while erecting it. The religious spirit was shown in town affairs, as no one would be allowed to vote unless he was a church member. Whenever danger threatened or provisions became scanty, fast days would be appointed and they were strictly kept and the day was devoted to fasting and prayer for deliverance from threatened dangers. In later years only one day in the year was kept as a day of fasting and prayer, and this appointed to be held in April where prayers were offered for a bountiful harvest. In this State the custom was discontinued as the day was given to feasting and sports, and Patriots' Day was adopted in its place.

When relieved from danger or there was an abundant harvest, days of thanksgiving were appointed, which later also occurred once in the year, a day in November being set apart for feasting, merry making and joy. One writer records that, "First Thanksgivings were for harvests, safe arrival of ships with provisions, etc., and it is on record that one prudent town postponed celebration for a week in order to get molasses to sweeten pumpkin pies." As the people of New England became settlers in the west and south, they carried with them their feelings of thanksgiving and now a national holiday is proclaimed yearly, and in many of the churches services are held and the spirit of thanksgiving as well as the form is duly recognized.

Early Buildings

Buildings to shelter the family and protect them from the wild beasts and Indians were the first to be provided by the settlers. Rude in appearance and destitute of architectural beauty, they would be warm and as the occupants were not accustomed to the conveniences and luxuries of modern civilization, they were satisfactory and the children received instructions in thrift and good citizenship, even if the buildings were primitive. As the first settlement was above the falls, so it is reasonable to expect the first buildings would be located in that

vicinity. The Durkee house, near Coburn's ferry, and the Garrison house opposite Totman road, are considered the oldest, while the Capt. Peter Coburn house north of Collinsville, would be erected soon after settlement. No house belonging to the Varnums remains standing. The garrison house on Riverside Street, owned by Joseph Varnum, remained until recent years, but is now removed. The art of photography was not known and our knowledge of the shape of the earliest buildins can be gathered only from old prints, many of them the result of the artist's imagination.

We need not assume that the first buildings were log houses, although the speculators who were here temporarily before the Coburns and Varnums may have built them. Chelmsford, just across the river, had been in existence fifty years and the many water privileges must have provided power for sawmills, while the axe wielded by a strong arm hewed into shape the oak timbers which composed the framework. The old houses, to which reference is made, retain the low studded rooms, the large beam across the ceiling and the corner posts in the rooms. These buildings are exceptional, as to a great extent the houses of those days were only one story in height with a square room on each side of the front door with a smaller room in the rear of the chimney which occupied the center of the house. A low attic, devoid of partitions, furnished sleeping rooms for the larger children while their elders occupied beds set up in the square rooms under which were the trundle beds which were drawn out at night and occupied by the little ones. In these houses large families were raised and not unfrequently an older son would bring home a wife, and grand children would find room to grow and thrive. In such cases another room might be provided, but in any case the house would be well filled. This is not a fanciful picture for houses of this kind have existed within the memory of the writer, who was acquainted with the occupants in their later life. It is unfortunate that no records have been kept relating to the time of the building of these houses. Allusions to them in the town records do not state whether they refer to an earlier building or one at present in existence. To form an opinion of the age of a building, its general features must be studied. If they corre-



JOHN WALLACE THISSELL

(See Page 425)

spond to those above described they belong to the period of the first settlement. This type of house could be found a few years ago reaching from New Boston Village to the Navy Yard by way of Meadow Bridge, but they have all disappeared.

The Osgood house now standing on the Mammoth road near ledge hill and owned by Charles H. Cutter is a type of these houses. While evidently of the period mentioned, the builder arranged for more room in the lower story, as back rooms were provided. The overhead beams, the large posts in the rooms, the huge chimney with capacious fireplaces are to be found which indicate a building of an early date. At the top of the crooked stairway may be seen two low attic rooms, each having a fireplace, which is rarely to be found in an attic room.

This style of houses while existing until the time of the Revolution, is now nearly extinct. It was followed by a more convenient type which represented the improved financial condition of the owners. The east side of Beaver brook was becoming settled. We now change to a larger house having two stories with four square rooms on the ground floor but by reason of a long sloping roof on the back only the two front chambers could be square. The examples of this type may be found in the Capt. Stephen Russell house, east of Hovey square, and the Curtis house on Broadway, now owned by Moses L. Daigle, and the old Richardson house on Hildreth St., near Coburn St.

Other houses are still standing which were at first built on this plan, but the long roof later removed, viz., the Hovey and Abbott houses at Hovey square. The Henry Richardson house at Hovey Square and the Rockwood D. Coburn house at New Boston, the latter built near the close of the Revolution, were of this type. The Richardson house just mentioned, was built by Gen. William Hildreth and is now a large three story house, but a visit to the attic reveals the marks on the chimney of the roof of the house showing the pitch of the roof and its original height. A later owner, desiring a larger house, added rooms on the north side and changed the roof to a flat one, supported by trusses.

The long roof type was followed by one which represents the time of the commencement of the last century. The two

roofs corresponded in shape, the beam in the ceiling and the low studded rooms had disappeared, but the large chimney, the crooked front stairs and the posts in the rooms, the result of using large timbers for framing, were retained. But by the introduction of stoves and the discontinuance of fire places in later years, the large central chimneys were no longer required and a chimney with one flue was substituted. The frames of the houses had been so well braced and the timbers so firmly joined by oak pins in mortice and tenon that when the house was raised the frame could be rolled about without changing its shape. This elaborate framing was discarded and the balloon frame of the present day substituted.

The meeting houses have been described in a former chapter and have undergone a similar change. The first one which stood on Varnum Avenue was doubtless of one story only and of primitive construction. The second one which was at the Navy Yard Village, must have had two stories, as when "dignified," reference is made to the gallery. The third one which, in 1794, was erected at Dracut Center and a little later, the one at Pawtucket bridge, were of the prevailing style with enclosed stairway, outside of the main building, with the pulpit near the center of the length of the building and the main aisle crossing the width of the room. Later changes placed the pulpit at the end of the room and the center aisle running lengthwise of the building, but at present individual styles have taken the place of regular types of architecture.

The changes in the school buildings have been even greater. One common room with fireplace and seats without any support for the back or feet have gradually improved until rooms are provided for different grades, steam heat and running water with low easy chairs, play grounds and modern sanitary conveniences furnished which promote health and comfort.

The farm barns were also all of one type. These have nearly all disappeared and as they will soon be things of the past a description of them will be given. The construction differed only in the number of floors, the smaller one having only one, the larger having two floors into which wagons could be driven, each being near the ends of the barn. The barn floor doors and all smaller ones except one on the opposite side opened

into the barnyard. The cows and oxen were ranged across the end of the barn facing the main floor, whose length was the width of the building. On the opposite side of the floor were stalls for the horses, pens for the young cattle and sheep, with small doors opening into the yard, and the deep bays for hay and the scaffolds. If the barn was not large enough to require two main floors, small doors on a level with the scaffolds gave an opportunity to pitch hay and sheaves of grain from wagons standing outside. Barn cellars were not provided until the present style of building was introduced.

The First Garrison House

The date of the erection of this building is not known, but it was in existence in 1664, five years before the first settlers, Varnum and Coburn, came from Ipswich. This building is now standing on a street which connects Varnum Avenue with the Boulevard and is owned by the City of Lowell, and permission has been granted the Lowell Historical Society to occupy it. This building is on a part of the Military grant of 1664, and four years later was sold to Edward Colburn, who, at his death, left it to his son Joseph. It was sold to the Blood family, who in turn sold it to Major W. H. H. Durkee and is known as the Durkee house.

Colburn erected houses in the vicinity for his sons which, in the Indian raid of 1675, were burned, but evidently he and his sons were stationed in this garrison house which was enclosed in a stout pallisade or stockade and were enabled to prevent its destruction. In this building Daniel Gookin, the Indian agent, held a court once a year until the settlement of the town. Minor cases were settled by the Indians, but Gookin's court corresponded to our Superior Court. It was originally a four-room house, with fire places having hearth stones ten feet in length. The shape of the original building is shown in the picture of the house. It was later enlarged to its present width by lengthening the rafters on the back of the house and making the roofs of unequal length, the front roof remaining unchanged. This roof was afterward lengthened, giving it its present shape. An examination of the attic room shows these alterations.

Edward Colburn's ferry was a continuation of this highway to Chelmsford and this building was the toll house. The stone posts which supported the gate still exist although only one is standing. During the years preceding the Revolution the broad fields adjoining were the parade ground for Capt. Peter Coburn's company and in the building, which was also a tavern, was the barroom which was considered indispensable on election days, the voters meeting here, where games and festivities would be continued for several days.

The Toll House at Central Bridge

"Where Varnum Park now is, stood at the end of the dismal covered bridge of the period, the toll house, which is hardly historical, but was the place of more than common interest and of distinct individuality. Many people will remember it, and also the sprightly lady who sometimes presided over the till—clean, crisp and of unbounded hospitality. There were hoodlums then as well as now; but no hoodlum who measured swords with her ever left the field without a scratch. On a Saturday afternoon, the great field day of country people, every inch of space belonging to the toll house was occupied by vehicles, with horses sleepily enjoying an unwonted holiday or luxuriously toying with their nose bags while the owners were over to Lowell trading. I can see them now, as they come trailing one by one wearily across the bridge, bearing their sheaves with them. The toll house was to the people of Dracut what a modern (men's) club house is today—a choice bit of gossip flying through the air was sure to find lodgement and circulation. The Boston Daily was passed from hand to hand, and contents noted, and lost, strayed or stolen conveniently posted. But when the bridge became free in 1850 (*sic*), the toll house was no longer needed and its star went out." (Mary E. Wight in Lowell book).

The last toll keeper was a man whose name was Spaulding and who through an accident had lost one of his lower limbs. What a contrast between those times when the toll man could leisurely collect his money, unfasten and swing back the gate which reached across the street, and have time for an interchange of views on the political situation after which the team

entering the bridge, he returned leisurely to the office before his services would again be required, a contrast when we consider the almost uninterrupted stream of vehicles, street cars and pedestrians which now daily pass over this bridge.

Town Records

The absence of records for the first ten years of the existence of the town forbids the recording of the transactions and vital records of that time. It is fortunate that the books have been preserved through the years in which they were kept in dwelling houses and liable at any time to be destroyed by fire. The peculiar spelling of names and lack of system in recording events are of minor importance and due allowance must be made for the phonetic spelling as the clerks, while men of sound sense and ability, had received very little education. To reproduce all their errors would occupy too much space in this work, although it would be of interest to record them.

A large blank book in which records of town meetings, vital statistics, private marks on cattle, etc., were all recorded together, was considered sufficient, while names of those who were born or died were often entered with no information relating to their parent's names or in any way connecting them with any particular family. One instance to illustrate will be given which is only one of many of a similar nature. While preparing a genealogy of the Colburn-Coburn families, the writer had occasion to record the date of death of Lydia, wife of Elijah Coburn, and the town records were consulted. There were several bearing this name, only three having the name of the husband given. The others were: Lydia d Jan 24 1813 Lydia d June 26 1821. Mrs. Lydia d. Feb. 21 1842. Lydia. Old age Dec 30 1846. Fortunately at that time some of the grand children were living and the one who gave the information that he was the baby at the time of her death, was born in 1821 and thus the date was secured Such entries are the despair of the genealogist. The clerk understood who they were and seems to have taken it for granted that future generations would be able to identify them.

The occupation given in some cases was peculiar, one being "hunting and loafing." While one name given a child was con-

sidered sufficient, the opposite extreme is often seen, thus, Caleb Methusaleh Bishop Baxter Polk Page, who had a brother equally well provided, who was named John Howard Wilberforce Clarkson Fox Penn Page.

That the clerks spelled names as they were pronounced we learn from a few examples. Austin, Astin and Astens. Clement, Clament, Clammons, Clements, Clemment, Clemons. Coburn, Colbon, Colburn, Coben, Coban. Bathshebu became Bashaba, Bathshebe, Bershaba, Barshaba and Barsha. Gilchrest was changed to Gilcreas, Gilcrest, Gilgreast, and Guilgreast.

While many births are unrecorded as there was no law until 1850, which required such record, some appear whose births occurred in other towns. Eight children of Benning and Elizabeth Moulton are recorded, but none of them born in Dracut. The death of Samuel Armor, "alias" Pompy, a Spanish Indian, is recorded as occurring on May 7, 1744, and it is possible that this is the Indian who is buried in the corner of the Varnum cemetery and near whom Silas Royal, who was owned by Gen. J. B. Varnum, was at his own request buried. The name of this colored man was pronounced in those days Rial, and when recorded was spelled "Silas riol," which was an enigma until it was remembered that the herb penny royal was called penny riol. Other names were changed, Atkinson became Adkinson, Ditson was changed to Didson, and was so spelled.

In the record of marriages the residence was in several cases given, "Resident som Whather," or they were called "forigner" or "Trancien person." Books with printed forms are now provided for these records giving name of child, date of birth, names of parents, etc., also records for marriages and deaths are for use of town clerks. The present law requires that old records shall be placed in fire proof vaults all shelves and inside doors must be metal and the records are not to be removed from the building. A Commissioner of Records is appointed to see that the letter is obeyed.

The opportunities for omission of record are rare, as a license for marriage and permit for burial must be issued and physicians and nurses must report births. A sum of money was bequeathed to the New England Historic Genealogical So-

ciety by Robert Henry Eddy, and November 6, 1901, the society voted "That the sum of $20000 from the bequest of the late Robert Henry Eddy be set aside as a special fund to be called the Eddy Town Record Fund for the sole purpose of publishing the Vital Records of the towns of Massachusetts and that the Council be authorized and instructed to make such arrangements as may be necessary for such publication. And the treasurer is hereby instructed to honor such drafts as shall be authorized by the Council for this purpose." To aid in this good work the state has made an annual appropriation for the publication of the records. All early records are included, but none later than 1850 as all since that date are to be found at the registry at Cambridge. The act passed by the Legislature is as follows:

Chapter 470.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Two.

AN ACT To provide for the Preservation of Town Records of Births, Marriages and Deaths Previous to the Year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Whenever the record of the births, marriages and deaths, previous to the year eighten hundred and fifty, of any town in this Commonwealth, shall be printed and verified in the manner required by the commissioner of public records and the board of free public library commissioners, acting jointly, and the work shall appear to them to have been prepared with accuracy, the secretary of the Commonwealth shall purchase five hundred copies of such record at a price not exceeding one cent per page: *provided*, that the written copy of the town records shall become the property of the Commonwealth, and shall be deposited in the office of the secretary of the Commonwealth; and *provided, further*, that not more than fiften thousand dollars shall be expended by authority of this act in any one year.

SECTION 2. The volumes purchased as aforesaid shall be distributed by the secretary as follows:—One copy to the office

of the secretary of the Commonwealth; one copy to the commissioner of public records; one copy to the free public library of each town and city of the Commonwealth; one copy to each state and territorial library in the United States; one copy to the library of Congress; one copy to each incorporated historical society in the Commonwealth; one copy to the library of each college in the Commonwealth; one copy to each registry of deeds, and one copy to the court of registration. The remainder shall be placed in the state library for purposes of exchange.

Approved June 11, 1902.

Notices were sent to the towns and cities of the fund described and they were given an opportunity to apply for the benefit of the same. It was the intention of the Society to make the publication of the records free of expense to the town, but later it was thought best for the towns to bear the expense of the manuscript copy. The trustees of the Public Library considered it proper to make inquiries in relation to expense, etc., and bring the matter before the town. An appropriation was made by the town and the work completed. The instructions relating to it were, no ink or paper to be used except such as was approved and furnished by the state, no private records of any description to be used, town and Church Records and cemetery headstones only to be copied. The writer of the manuscript while preparing it in his own hand writing, must follow the exact copy as found. If the clerks of the earlier days interlined words, or wrote and then drew a pen through them, or gave the word a wrong spelling or improper use of capital letters, or made an ornamental letter these must all be reproduced. If he caused a blot to be made or touched the page with an inky finger or absentmindedly made any marks, all such must appear in the manuscript which is deposited in the state archives while the printed copy corrects these errors. When ready, a verifier was sent from Boston and the work examined. It was then printed, bound and distributed without further cost to the town. Historical societies in some cases have furnished the funds in connection with the state with the provision that the printing, binding and general make up must all correspond with

the other copies making their appearance uniform. The towns and cities that have prepared the records now number 145, and a copy of each may be found in the reference room at the town library building.

Transportation and Vehicles

When the first settlers in the region now known as New England, explored the country, reports of such explorations do not include any reference to the use of horses and none were imported on the ships which followed the Mayflower. The Indians had no highways, a few beaten paths were sufficient for their use as all journeys by land were made on foot and for their use on the rivers and ponds they were skilful in fashioning light, strong canoes of birch bark which covered a wooden frame. For them time was of no value and consequently speed was not a factor to be considered, so that long journeys, when necessary, held no element of care or dread for them. With no fixed habitation they were at home wherever a camping ground was found near a fishing place and where a hostile tribe could not surprise them. These early settlers needed no means of transportation as there were no settlements nearer than those of the Dutch in New York and the French in Canada. When Roger Williams was banished from the colony he walked through the woods to Rhode Island, sleeping at night in the forest without covering except what was afforded by the trees and rocks.

When the towns between this part of the Merrimack river and the sea were incorporated and horses introduced the means of communication were improved, but somewhat restricted. As horses could not be provided for every member of the family, a device called a pillion was attached to the saddle, which enabled the man and wife to be carried by one horse, and probably a small child could be held by the mother. To reach a seat on the pillion, a horse block was provided, from the top of this block it was easy to reach the seat. These blocks, when their use was discontinued, disappeared, but occasionally one may be found. Such a one may be seen at the present time, it being a solid rock forming a part of a ledge having on the side

a step, cut with a chisel midway between the top and the ground. This is near the site of the Edward Coburn house, which stood on the stage road from Boston to Concord just over the state line in Pelham. The farm was later the Capt. Gilbert Coburn farm.

As the need for transportation of farm produce, lumber, etc., increased wheel vehicles came into general use, taking the place of saddle bags, which, as the name implies, were bags attached to the saddle, in which small articles could be conveyed and, as may be seen in the article relating to colored people, little children were sometimes carried. The first wagons were heavy lumbering affairs, destitute of springs and with wheels revolving on a wooden axletree. The first improvement was the use of the thorough brace, used only on two-wheeled vehicles. Two frames consisting of a stout piece of wood bolted to the shafts and connected by a cross piece in each formed the frame of a cradle, the end of the frame on the shaft forming an acute angle with the shaft. From the cross piece of the frame in front to the one at the back stout leather straps extended on which the body of the vehicle rested, the seat being directly over the axletree. Thus the body was slung as in a hammock, and to some extent the rider protected from the roughness of the road. These which had no top were road sulkys, called gigs, and used largely by physicians in their daily journeys, while those which had covers were the chaises of our ancestors and were retained in use by doctors until the days of automobiles.

Occasionally a four-wheeled wagon could be seen with the body resting on thoroughbraces which were attached to a low frame instead of swinging in the air as was the case of the chaise. When wagon bodies were placed on steel springs, these springs could be adapted to the wagon body but not to the chaise, and so the thoroughbrace survived. Although many improvements have been made and different styles of carriages produced, the principle of the steel spring still exists, not being superceded by anything better. The present century marks the decline of horse-drawn vehicles, those drawn by oxen have disappeared, and the automobiles and aeroplanes are fast supplanting the methods of locomotion of our ancestors.

The Jay Treaty

The citizens of Dracut had taken an active part in the establishment of a republic as has been shown in previous chapters and, as was their right, they claimed and exercised this right by watching the acts of those in authority and were not afraid to remonstrate whenever anything was done which they considered prejudicial to the interests of good government. In 1793, the French Republic declared war against England and endeavored to persuade the United States to become an ally. As steps were taken by France to compel this new republic to engage in this war, the sympathy of France was forfeited and this government remained neutral. The course taken by England at this time was such as to involve us in a war on our own account. Besides violating treaties, her greatest offence was the impressment of seamen on American ships and obliging them to serve in the English navy, claiming that they were subjects of Great Britain. Wishing to avoid further war, Washington sent John Jay as Envoy Extraordinary to England, to conclude a treaty by which a settlement of the difficulties might be made. This treaty was ratified by the Senate, but while satisfactory terms were made on some of the points in dispute, the article relating to the impressment of sailors remained unchanged. It was very unsatisfactory to Washington, but realizing that it was impossible at the time to conclude a treaty on better terms he, after much hesitation, signed it.

In common with other towns throughout the country, Dracut held an indignation meeting, at which 160 of the citizens voted unanimously to protest against the treaty and a remonstrance was duly signed, setting forth their reasons for such action in forcible but respectful language. The concluding paragraph is: "We are unanimously of the opinion, 160 voters being present in the said meeting, that the said treaty ought never to become a law of the United States." Time has proved the wisdom of Washington's action, although at the time he was severely censured by those who preferred war. The townspeople did not carry their right to remonstrate to excess, but doubtless in common with others realized later the wisdom of the ratification of the treaty.

CHAPTER XX

BIOGRAPHY AND GENEALOGY

THE limits of a town history forbid an extended account of the families, but a brief sketch of those who were prominent in the early history of the town will be given. Of these a few descendants remain who bear the name of their ancestors, while in many cases the original name is extinct, but there are representatives of nearly all of the early families, although through marriage the names are changed. In the earlier centuries of the Christian era, surnames were unknown. Individuals were known by their occupation, their local surroundings, their personal appearance, and by their titles. Thus James the cooper became James Cooper, George by the lake was George Lake, Adam the short was Adam Short, and Edward the clerk was Edward Clark, as the name was then pronounced. In Arthur's "Dictionary of Names" we find that: "It is impossible to decide at what precise period names became stationary or began to descend hereditary. According to Camden, surnames began to be taken up in France about the time of the Conquest (1066), or a very little before, under King Edward the Confessor." Among the Scandinavians, and particularly in the Swedish country, the son received the father's name, with "son" for a final syllable, as, John's son which became Johnson. Other pecularities will be noticed in the sketches of the families.

Abbott

The name is derived from the Syriac word *abba,* meaning father, and an abbot was the superior or head of a monastery. The first of this name to emigrate was George Abbott, who came to this country from Yorkshire about 1640, settling in Andover, where his descendants are prominent in business circles. The line of Solomon, who was the first in Dracut, is George[1], Benjamin[2], David[3], Solomon[4]. He came from Andover in 1758, and purchased from John White 110 acres of land with build-

ings, and a ferry and fishing rights formerly belonging to Robert Hildreth. The farm extended from the river to Tenth Street and from what is now Bridge Street to Beacon Street. He sold, in 1761, 57 acres with the ferry to Amos Bradley of Haverhill. His wife's name was Hannah Colby. One of his sons, David[5], owned a farm on the river, including a group of islands below Hunt's Falls, called Abbotts Islands, but sold his property in 1804 and removed from town. Solomon, Jr.[5], purchased a farm on the Mammoth Road, extending to Beaver Brook. Another son, Daniel Colby[5], was a carpenter and purchased a farm on what is now Hildreth Street, which was formerly the stage road from Boston to Concord, N. H. It was purchased of the heirs of John Bowers and is north of Hovey Square. This was the well-known Abbot farm, and the original house consisted of only two rooms, to which Mr. Abbott made additions, the roof in the rear being longer than the one in front, leaving but one story on the back, but later it was changed to its present appearance. Land was purchased adjoining, also outlying pastures and woodland, and at his death his son, Daniel[6] , came into possession of valuable property. Daniel C.[5] held the office of town treasurer for twenty-one years and was Representative to the General Court. His son, Daniel[6], born in 1804, was a farmer and held minor offices in the town. Others of the name were in town at an early date. One Daniel Abbott lived on a farm at the Navy Yard village which had formerly been owned by the minister, Rev. Nathan Davis, but sold the property in 1765. Dr. James Abbott lived at Collinsville, opposite the tenements of the American Woolen Co. on the Mammoth Road. Five men of the name served in the Revolutionary army, from Dracut.

Ansart.

Marie Louis Amand Ansart de Marisquelle was a native of France, born in 1742. As a citizen of France his name was as given above, but voluntarily relinquishing a title and citizenship of that country he became simply Louis Ansart. His father was a marquis and the son was given an education at a military school. He gave his attention to the study of en-

gineering instead of the duties of the field and camp. His special work was the casting of cannon, and in this department he was proficient. Soon after the American Colonies declared their independence, he, with many others, came to this country. Recognizing the need of the American Army for efficient artillery, he at once saw his opportunity, and offering his services to the State of Massachusetts, they were accepted. The offer of his services has been preserved and are interesting and explanatory.

"Prosposal of Monsieur De Marisquelle

Marie Louis Amand Ansant De Marisquelle an old Captain of Infantry having been brought up in the forges of France (his father and the Marquis of Montalembert, his relative, having furnished for many years all the Iron cannon in the service of the French King) proposes to the Honorable Council and House of Representatives to establish furnaces in the State of Massachusetts Bay upon account of government for the purpose of furnishing the state with all such Iron cannon as they may need. He has some particular methods of softening the Iron by a mixture of ores and minerals and also of casting the cannon solid and boring the same by which means they are rendered less massy and yet stronger than others cast with a cylinder which always occasioned many little holes or cavities in the pieces and which frequently occasioned the bursting. His father having observed how prejudicial those cavities were to the service of artillery, he in the year 1750 cast many solid cannon and find them superior to those cast with a cylinder, and at present no other but solid cannon are cast in the forges of France.

His father is the inventor of the machine which is used for boring said cannon and with it a 24 pounder can be bored, polished and the spruce cut off in twenty-four hours. If the state will furnish the lands, buildings, machines and every necessary material for the apparatus he will construct the furnaces and superintend and erect the buildings and every thing relating to the said foundry, which being ready and the mills prepared for boring, he will then furnish one cannon ready for service every twenty-four hours out of the common iron ore within this

state, it being understood that he should have cast a few beforehand to give them time to cool. The calibre or bore of the cannon will depend on the largeness of the furnaces. He will prove his cannon before commissioners appointed by the state. He will disclose at any time all his knowledge in the premises to any such persons as the state may order and to no others. And if he does not fulfil the whole promised on his part in these proposals (unavoidable casualities excepted) he agrees not only to forfeit all claims to anything by virtue of these presents but also to forfeit the sum of 1000 pounds to satisfy the damages the state may sustain through his failure in fulfilling his proposals as aforesaid. He expects from the state to receive $300 in hand to compensate the expenses he has been at removing from Europe to this state and also $1000 yearly from and after the date hereof to the end of the present war between Great Britain and the United States of America and after that time the sum of $666 & 2/3 dollars yearly during his life he doing and performing his part in all respects as aforesaid. He also expects the honor of a Colonels Commission to give him rank but without any command or pay in virtue of said commission. Dated Dec. 6, 1776."

These terms were accepted by the authorities of the State and he was appointed Inspector-General of foundries and Colonel of Artillery in the American army. His headquarters were at Boston, where he became acquainted with his future wife, Miss Elizabeth Wimble, daughter of William Wimble. Their marriage took place in 1778, but her death occurred soon after, and in 1781 he married her sister, Catherine, a miss of fifteen years of age, who became the mother of ten children. Although he had anticipated no active service, he applied for an opportunity to experience some active duty, and when the Rhode Island campaign was opened in 1778, he was sent by the Board of war to Gen. Sullivan with a letter in which he was recommended as one capable and efficient. He is described by the Board as one "Glowing with Ardor to signalize himself in the intended Expedition who comes to offer himself with Cheerfulness to any service for which you may think him qualified." And they further stated, "that from long personal knowledge

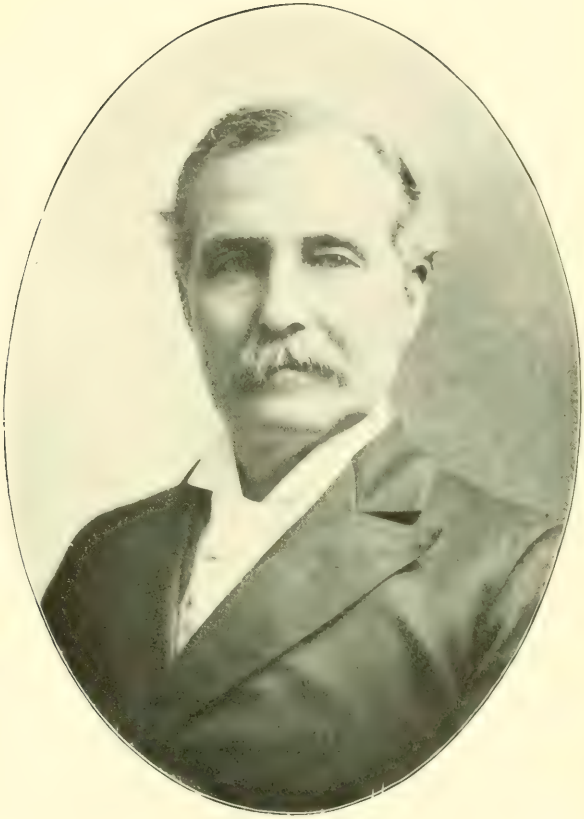
and acquaintance we have had with him we can recommend him as a brave and worthy man and flatter ourselves he will so acquit himself as to deserve that Approbation from his General for which he is so eagerly panting.'' He served as an aid to Gen. Sullivan and was later sent to assist D'Estaing, who had command of the French fleet. In 1784, he selected Dracut as his home and removed here residing on what is now Varnum Avenue, near the Old Meadow Road. In 1793 he became a citizen of the United States as this country was later called. The people of France had followed the example of America and overthrown monarchy and established a republic, but the change had caused many of the wealthy citizens to become impovirished. On account of this the property owned by Colonel Ansart was of little value to him and as his pension was barely sufficient to support his large family, he was able to leave only a small amount for their support at his death which took place May 22, 1804, at the age of 62 years.

His love of display led him to purchase the first *chaise* ever seen in Dracut, and as he made his first entry into town after purchasing it, the neighbors ran to the windows to see the curiosity. He, while doubtless secretly pleased, cursed them for fools. The food to which the townspeople were accustomed was not acceptable to him, and he procured a French cook from Boston to supervise the cooking. When Lafayette visited this country in 1825, he came to Dracut to see Col. Ansart, a fellow countryman and fellow soldier of the Revolution.

He is buried in the Woodbine Cemetery near Varnum Avenue, and on his tombstone it is recorded that ''He arrived in this country in 1776 and by the Authorities of Massachusetts was immediately appointed a Colonel of Artillery and Inspector General of the Foundries in which capacity he served until the close of the war of the Revolution.'' His portrait has been placed in the Dracut Public Library.

His genealogical line is:

1. Michael Ansart.
2. Robert Ansart, who married Antoinette Perrin.
3. Jacques Francois Ansart, born June 24, 1684; died July 6, 1756; married Feb. 29, 1713, Petronille Gery de Marisquelle.



CYRUS RICHARDSON, D. D.

(See Page 417)

4. Robert Xavier Ansart, born Nov. 14, 1713; died Feb. 10, 1790, married Catherine Guillelmine, who was born Sept 18, 1713.

5. Marie Louis Amand Ansart de Marisquelle, born 1742; died May 22, 1804, married Elizabeth Wimble, and at her death he married her sister, Catherine, who was born in 1763, and died Jan 27, 1849. From a record in possession of the Lowell Historical Society, said to be in the handwriting of Dr. Amos Bradley, the names of Robert, born Sept. 23, 1782, and Lewis born Oct. 5, 1783 are found. The Dracut "Vital Records" record the names of those born in Dracut.

Julia, born June 19, 1785; died Oct. 12, 1869; married December 30, 1806, Bradley Varnum.

Elizabeth Wimble, born June 22, 1787; M. Nov. 15, 1804, Jonathan Hildreth.

Sophia, born July 23, 1784; married 1st, Peter Haseltine Jr. 2d, Dr. Nathan B. Spalding.

Hariot, born March 12, 1791; died Jan. 2, 1814; married, May 7, 1809, Samuel Wood.

Felix, born Jan 26, 1793.

Catherine, born Nov. 29, 1794; died Aug. 27, 1829; married, March 12, 1826; William Leighton.

Athis, born Dec. 21, 1796; Married Joanna ——.

Abel, born Oct. 2, 1798; married Martha Brown.

Bowers

The name is derived from bower a dwelling or shady recess. The first of the name in this country was George, who, in 1636, lived at Scituate and in 1656 was at Cambridge. Jerathmeel[2] came to Chelmsford now Lowell, and located near Pawtucket Falls, where he is recorded as having a "still for strong water."

Johnathan[3], born 1674; John[4], born 1707, married Anna Crosby. John[5], born 1737, married Rachel Varnum. His farm was on the east side of Hildreth Street, reaching from Pleasant Street to Tan House Brook, including the Abbott farm and other land near Hovey Square. John[6], born Dec. 23, 1757; married in 1777 Abiah Goodhue, and lived at New Boston Village on the farm lately owned by Wm. Kendall. John[4] and

his father John[5], were minute men and marched to Lexington on the memorable 19th of April, 1775. The death of John[6] occurred while returning to his home at night after working for a neighbor. His path crossed a shallow brook west of the cemetery, over which a plank was laid, and his body was found lying in the water. It is thought that he was attacked with giddiness and, being unable to rise from the water, was drowned. Peter[7] and Thomas[7] lived on Hampson Street, opposite Kinsella Street, and their brother, James[7] lived at the corner of Lakeview Avenue and New Boston road, the farm now owned by H. Jesse Coburn. Five of this name are on the Roll of Honor of Revolutionary soldiers.

Coburn and Colburn

The earliest mention of the name is found during the reign of Henry VIII, who became King of England in the year 1509. At that time the name was spelled Colbarne, becoming later Colburne, Colburn and Coburn. The home of this family was in Staffordshire, and Feb. 6, 1553, Edward Colbarne, gentleman, was elected a member of Parliament. Henry VIII died in 1547 and as his son, Edward VI, reigned only six years, Edward Colbarne must have been a member of Parliament during the reign of King Edward's sister, Mary, known in history as "Bloody Mary," who married Philip of Spain, son of the Emperor Charles V. Edward had a brother, Sir George Colburne. The will of Edward Colbarne, gentleman, of the city of Litchfield, was proved July 13, 1568 in the probate court of Canterbury.

He bequeaths to wife Katherine and her daughter, lands I bought in Colwyche (now Colwich). To William Colbarne son of Roger Colbarne 5 works as well as the wood, bricks and tiles he sold when managing the works and woods in Hoppas Haye. His executors were his brother Francis Colbarne and Richard Allen, servant. It is interesting to know that at that early day the names of Coburn and Dracut had a connection which a century later (1669) was renewed when a possible descendant, Edward Colburn became the first settler of the town of Dracut

in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. In 1553 when Edward was a member of Parliament from Stafford, Sir Philip Draycot was member from Litchfield while later Edward represented Litchfield and Stafford was represented by Sir Philip Draycot. The similarity of the names of the earlier Colburns to those of the settlers of Dracut render it very probable that this family was the immediate ancestors of the Dracut family of a century later.

It is difficult to ascertain from what this name is derived. In the "Genealogy of the Colburn-Coburn Families" it is stated that "Names of Cockburn, Colborne, Colburn and Coburn are to be found in the histories of Great Britain and Ireland, but however spelt, it is generally agreed by those who have made a study of the name that the English and Scotch pronunciatin is Coburn. In England at the present day we have proof of this in the name of the locality in London, High Holburn, which is pronounced Hoburn * * * * There is good reason to believe that the name is not a Saxon but Scandinavian name, and that the family came to England with the Danes, that they were sea kings and that the name means either black bear or king's bear. It is possible that it may be a Scotch name, meaning Coldstream, a burn being a small brook or, English, relating to an occupation viz. a coal burner."

In William Arthur's "Etymological Dictionary of Family Names," the word Colburn is given as a Cornish-British word, meaning the dry well or the well on the neck of the hill.

In the list of passengers who sailed from Liverpool in 1635 on the Ship *Defence* in command of Capt. Bostock, the name of Edward Colburn appears. His home was in Wilts County, England, and when, at the age of seventeen, he arrived in Boston, he went to Ipswich and was employed by Nathaniel Saltonstall, who owned a large estate in that town, and who later committed the management of the farm to him. The plan of the town of Ipswich does not include any farm belonging to Edward, although he owned some outlying land. He married Hannah, whose surname is not given in the records, but references in private letters lead to the conclusion that her name was Rolfe. His neighbor, Samuel Varnum, had purchased in 1668, a tract of land in what was known as "The Wilderness

north of the Merrimac,'' which later became Dracut. Large tracts of land in this vicinity were for sale and probably influenced by his neighbor Varnum at Ipswich he purchased a tract as already described in a former chapter. As the Indians were troublesome, he occupied a garrison house near the river, and with his wife and children, who were born at Ipswich, he removed here in 1669. His children were Edward, John, Robert, Thomas, Daniel, Hannah, Ezra, Joseph, and Lydia. The greater part of the Coburns and Colburns in the United States descend from the six younger brothers, Edward[2] being killed in King Philip's war in 1675, as already recorded. The descendants of Edward and Hannah had been prominent in public affairs in town and state. In the lists of those who served in the different wars which have occurred since the settlement of the town, the name of this family appears defending the rights and liberties of the country. On the Roll of Honor the names of 33 Coburns appear as serving in the War of the Revolution.

The descendants of Edward[1] are recorded in ''The Genealogy of the Colburn-Coburn Families,'' published in 1913. His sons were Edward Jr. born 1642, who, in 1675, was killed by the Indians. This was during King Philip's war, which was intended to be a war of extermination of the white settlers. A small company of soldiers who had been sent to Brookfield to assist in the suppression of an Indian uprising, while marching to a place designated by the Indians for the conclusion of a treaty, were attacked by about 200 Indians and Edward Jr. with others were killed.

John, the second son, born 1644, married Hannah Reed. In the division of land made by his father while living, John received a lot on the river, and as many of his descendants lived in Dracut he probably settled here. Robert, born about 1666, married Mary Bishop of Chelmsford. Although he received his share in the Webb purchase, he sold, in 1700, the year before his death, his share to his brother Daniel. His home was in Beverly, where his children were born. The descendants of Robert are found in nearly all of the states, few, if any, ever living in Dracut. There have been men of great ability among them one of whom deserves particular mention. This was Foster

D. Coburn, who was in the eighth generation. He served in the Civil War in an Illinois regiment and at its close he went to Kansas City, Kansas, where he engaged in farming, which became his life work. Recognizing the need of better methods of farming and the opportunities for advancement in the service he made a study of the business of farming and wrote extensively on the subject, some of his subjects being "Alfalfa," "Swine in America," "The Helpful Hen," "Cow Culture," "Corn and Sorghums," and many others. He became State Secretary of Agriculture, a position which he has held several times. He has had no ambition for holding political office, refusing the nomination for Governor of the State, declining the appointment which was offered him of U. S. Senator and of a position in the Cabinet as National Secretary of Agriculture. "Hampton Magazine" says: "In the Agricultural Colleges of Australia, where his books are used in the courses of instruction, in all the great farm institutes of the Middle West, among authorities everywhere, Coburn of Kansas is the biggest and safest authority of the century."

In the line of Robert in the seventh generation we find Zerah Colburn, Vermont's famous mathematical prodigy, whose birth occurred in Cabot, Sept. 1, 1804. At the age of six years he was described as being "surprisingly gifted as an arithmetical calculator." Having been widely exhibited in Vermont, his precocity attracted attention elsewhere and he was taken on an extended tour. Boston people found he could answer problems sooner, much sooner, than they could be done on paper. On short notice and without pencil or paper he found the number of seconds in 2,000 years. Observers said he computed the number of seconds in 11 years in less than four seconds. Square and cube roots he extracted with unexplainable ease. Skeptics failed to dumfound him and wherever he went he found that his reputation had preceded him.

Carrying letters of introduction, the boy went to England, Scotland and Ireland. Learned profesors received him with acclaim. When asked to square 888,888, he gave the correct result in 12 figures and then multiplied the product by 49. Colburn appears to have had a strangle hold on factoring. He could give all the factors of many large numbers. Prominent

mathematicians, baffled by his consistency in replying to rapid fire questions in arithmetic, gave him a certain number of 10 figures. Mentally and with little loss of time he found the only two factors which it had. It was said to him that his marvelous powers combined rapidity, remarkable accuracy and unfailing memory. Unconsciously, sometimes, while doing his most difficult tasks, he would go into bodily contortions, a circumstance to which his observers attached great importance.

That he should have turned his genius to financial account was not uncharacteristic of human nature. Money and fame came to him at his beckoning and he lived to accomplish a good many things that were worth while, but students of this wonderful calculator love best to read of his earlier years before his public demonstrations were made for gain. In one way or another and at divers times in an eventful career he received the foundation for a broad education at the Westminster school in England, the Royal college in Paris and at the University of Vermont. He became a minister and preached in Vermont towns for nine years. Death overtook him in 1839 while he was a professor of languages at Norwich, Conn.

The third son of Edward was Thomas, who was married twice and to whom thirteen children were born. He received a portion of the Evered purchase and the Satchell land which was deeded to him by his father. His home was probably in Dracut.

Daniel[2], the fourth son of Edward[1], married Sarah Blood, a granddaughter of Major Simon Willard, who was a noted Indian fighter in King Philip's war in 1647. Major Willard was one of the Commissioners, who, in 1652, was appointed to locate the northern boundary of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, where his initials of "S. W." are to be found on the famous Endicott Rock at the Weirs. Daniel's wife's home was at Concord in this state, and after ten years' residence in Dracut, he purchased land in the first named town where, after 1697, his three youngest children were born. His nine children, with the exception of the youngest, settled in Dracut. Ezra[2], the fifth son, married Hannah Varnum, of Ipswich, and, in common with his brothers, receiving a portion of the Evered and Satchell land from his father, he lived in Dracut, where many of the descendants of his six children settled. Joseph[2], the

youngest son of Edward, received from his father his share in the lands already mentioned and in addition he received by will the garrison house now known as the Durkee House. He was the one selected to care for his father in his declining years. Although his home was in Dracut, there are only a small number of his descendants in town. There is but one representative in town of John[2], viz Hon. Arthur W Colburn who is in the ninth generation. None of the descendants of Robert[2] settled in Dracut. Of the nine children of Daniel[2], only two sons had families. Of the descendants of later years, Elizabeth, Augustus, Erastus, Charles F. and Phineas are dead; the brothers Gilbert Sylvester, George D. and Silas R. the latter the compiler of this history, also Lyman, of East Dracut, and the brothers Otis P. and Oliver J., at present residing in town.

These comprise all those who claim descent from Daniel[2] and lived in Dracut. Among the descendants of Thomas[2], special mention should be made of Rev. Isaac D. Colburn, in the seventh generation, who became interested in foreign missionary work, and in 1863, with his wife, sailed for Burmah, called at that time Farther India. Of his seven children six were born at different stations in India, viz. Maulmain, Amherst, Tavoy and Rangoon, the youngest being born after his return to America which, on account of ill health, occurred in 1880. In this line were the brothers George B.[7] and Frank[7] well known in Lowell, natives of Dracut and sons of George W.[6], who was an able and prominent citizen of Dracut. In this line was Charles B.[6] who established the paints and oil business in Lowell, also Joseph B. V.[6], a resident of Varnum Avenue.

The descendants of Ezra[2] include several families who lived in Dracut. Of those who were prominent, one line at least can be located on their farms. Samuel[3] lived near his grandfather's garrison house on Varnum Avenue, Jonathan[4] lived at New Boston Village on the farm lately owned by John W. Peabody. His sons, Saul[5], Jonathan[5] and Micah[5], occupied farms in the same village. The names of Saul[5] and Thaddeus[5] are on the Roll of Honor, the former on his 18th birthday being engaged in battle. They were very young when enlisting, as Thaddeus was three years younger than Saul. Both returned and settled in New Boston Village where their descendants lived. Saul[6] Jr.

was in the war of 1812 and held the office of the Matross. He served in a Billerica Company under Capt. Isaac Barrows in the artillery. His office requiring him to assist the gunners in loading, firing and sponging the cannon and to march with the store wagon as guard and assistant. The descendants of Ezra[2] in Dracut are Horatio Jesse, and Elmer W., who are great grandsons of Saul[5]. Rockwood D. and Henry G., great grandsons of Thaddeus[5], and Lovell W., grandson of Micah[5]. Capt. Peter Coburn was of this line, but for many years has had no descendants of the name in Dracut. None of the male line have lived in Dracut in the later years who could claim Joseph[2] as their ancestor.

One of the descendants of Joseph, the youngest son of Edward[1], is Abner in the sixth generation who was the son of Eleazer, he was born in Tyngsboro, but, with his parents, removed to Canaan, Maine, now included in the town of Skowhegan. Soon after reaching his twenty-first year, he was engaged in school teaching and surveying. In 1830, he engaged in lumbering with his father and brother, Philander, and this became the life work of these sons. They purchased thousands of acres of western woodlands, and by judicious management became millionaires. As a public man his services in places of trust were conducted in a highly honorable manner. In 1862, he was nominated for Governor of Maine and elected, receiving 4000 votes more than were cast for his opponents. "He was one of the loyal War Governors who held up the hands of Lincoln in those troublous times. He was Governor in fact as well as in name, and there was no power behind the throne. The business of the state was conducted on strict business principles with the same integrity which characterized the man in all the relations of life." ["Hist. of Coburn Family."] At his death his public bequests exceeded one million dollars.

Deacon Joshua Colburn was born in Dracut, being in the seventh generation from Edward[1]. He succeeded his father Dea. Joshua, Sr. as an officer in the church. After his marriage with Hannah Tenney, he resided in New Hampshire, but a brother who had settled on the home farm prefering other business, he removed to Dracut, where his death occurred in 1886. He was a man whose influence, whether exerted in home

life or in public, was always for good. His public duties were those connected with the church and the affairs of the district school which were performed with good judgment. During his life, he made additions to the number of acres which comprised the original farm which at his death he left to his son, Selden.

Deacon Selden Colburn, his son, was born in Dracut, Dec. 28, 1849. He married, in 1875, Jane, daughter of John and Jane Murkland. He was educated in the Dracut schools, and as his inclinations were for farming he entered upon the farm duties which occupied his time and attention until his death which occurred Feb. 15, 1914. Long experience and love of his chosen vocation enabled him to conduct the business of the farm in a successful manner. While not seeking public office, he was chairman of the school board, an office for which he was especially qualified owing to his executive ability, which he possessed in a marked degree. He was devoted to the work of the church holding the office once filled by his progenitors. In 1909 he married for his second wife Lavina McCutcheon, daughter of William and Margaret.

Arthur W. Colburn, his son, was born Dec. 1, 1877, and attended the public schools of Dracut. He inherited a love for the science of agriculture and entered the New Hampshire Agricultural College, graduating in 1897, receiving the title of Bachelor of Science. He is an active member of the Center Congregational Church in which he has been deeply interested and the duties of the offices connected with the church he has performed in an acceptable manner. He is a member of Centralville Lodge, I. O. O. F. and of Dracut Grange, at one time holding the office of Master of the Grange. In town affairs he has been a member of the school committee, and of the board of selectmen and assessors. In 1909, he was appointed collector of taxes, and this office he still holds. As Representative to the General Court, he was a member of the House in 1915 and 1916, and the three years following he was a member of the Senate. In the many offices he has held, he has shown good executive ability combined with rare judgement and a thorough acquaintance with the duties which he has been called upon to perform.

George W. Coburn was the youngest son of Gen. Simon and Molly Varnum Coburn. He received his education in the Centralville and Bradford Academies. He possessed good executive ability, which was recognized by the town, and he performed the duties which were required of him as a town officer in a manner acceptable to the citizens of Dracut. He was chosen to represent the town at the General Court in 1853 and 1854, and was active in introducing measures of great benefit to the Commonwealth. Upon the organization of the U. S. Internal Revenue system in 1862, he was appointed assistant assessor and later Deputy collector, offices which he filled for 16 years. He was general referee and advisor in cases of dispute, and was always ready with words of sympathy and advice to anyone who was in trouble. He was an earnest advocate of temperance and used his influence in the cause. In his later years he engaged in real estate and insurance business, which was his occupation at the time of his death.

Clement

The name is derived from the Latin word *Clemens,* meaning mild, meek, gentle. The family descends from Albert Clements, Marshal of France in 1183. The Dracut family is descended from Robert, who came from England early in the year 1642. He landed at Salisbury and proceeded to Haverhill with his family, consisting of wife and children. He was the first Deputy of the town to the General Court and until 1654 was associate judge and County Commissioner. Of the succeeding generations but little is known except a genealogical record. Robert[2], born in 1624, married Elizabeth Faun or Fane. Robert[3] married Elizabeth Palmer. Nathaniel[4] married Eleanor Coburn, daughter of Daniel[2]. He was the first of the name to reside in Dracut. He came into possession of one or more of the long narrow lots above Collinsville between Beaver Brook and Long Pond, which was a part of the Grant of 1693. This included the present Clement farm and the Hill farm which adjoins it on the north. His house stood on the southerly slope of the hill on which the buildings now stand, and reference is made to it in the chapter relating to the establishment of the

province line. He divided his farm giving the northern half to his son, David, and the southern half to Daniel. He was probably buried on the knoll north of the present Oakland cemetery, described in the chapter relating to cemeteries.

Daniel[5] married Eunice Hunt, the name on the town records being spelled Unis. David[5] married Molly ——, two of their sons, Isaac and David Jr. serving in the Revolution. Moses[6], son of Daniel[5], born Sept. 24, 1758, married, in 1781, Mrs. Rachel Perham, of Dunstable. When sixteen years of age he was at the Battle of Bunker Hill and his musket is in existence with the letters M. C. cut in the stock. Asa[7], son of Moses, was born Sept. 28, 1784. He was a captain in the militia and married June 6, 1812, Elizabeth Wilson of Pelham, N. H. He married for second wife Mrs. Delia Marland of Windham, N. H. Asa[8] was born May 8, 1813, and married Nov. 30, 1837, Hannah J. Peabody, of Methuen. Inheriting the Clement farm, he pursued the occupation of farmer. He became interested in horticulture, and by careful study of this branch of farming, he became very successful in fruit raising and the growing of trees, and grape vines. He was one of the original members of the Middlesex North Agricultural Society, serving as president from Sept. 25, 1867 to Sept. 20, 1869, and for eight years was a delegate to the State Board of Agriculture. He was interested in the Farmers' Institute, before which he read essays on farming which he had prepared. He was an active member of the Pawtucket Church, serving as deacon and Sunday school superintendent. As a member of the Board of Selectmen and the school committee, he rendered valuable service to the town. In 1869 he represented the district in the General Court. Five of the name served in the Revolution. The children of Asa[8] were Arthur M. now living in Dracut, Dr. George, Mrs. Warren C Hamblett and Mrs. Joseph M. Wilson.

Cheever

The name is derived from the French *Chever*, which means to master or overcome. The first of the name in the country was Ezekiel, who was a famous master in the Boston Latin school

and the name Ezekiel was frequent in the later generations. The Cheevers were in Dracut before the time of the division and allotment of the Reserved Lands of 1720.

Nathaniel received the third lot in the range north of the Coburn New Meadows lying between Beaver Brook and Island Pond; also the fifteenth lot on the river. He died Sept. 4, 1762. His brother Ezekiel married Hannah Phillips, of Marblehead, in 1738. Their son, Ezekiel, married Mrs. Martha Hall in 1764 and he served in the Revolutionary War. Their son, Ezekiel, born in 1776, married in 1804 Elizabeth Gayge of Pelham, N. H., and they were the parents of the elderly ladies, Hannah and Eliza, whose death occurred in recent years.

John, a brother of the last named Ezekiel married in 1798 Isbell Maloone, as spelled in the town records, a daughter of William and Sarah Malone the cellar of whose house may be seen on the top of Loon, more properly, Malone's hill. Seven children were born, two of whom, Oliver and Elbridge Gerry, will be remembered by the older residents of the town.

The first Cheever house was built in what is now a pasture north of the farm buildings formerly owned by C. H. Stickney. In accordance with an early custom it was located near a spring of water, from which they could obtain their supply until wells could be dug. It was thought to have peculiar medicinal properties and still furnish water of a superior quality. At the time of location of this house the highways had not been laid out and the ways leading to the ferries were by paths but upon the allotment of Reserved Land and the town ways being accepted this house with others in similar situations was abandoned and a new house built on the public road. Thus it is understood what is meant by the location of cellars in the woods and pastures with no apparent means of reaching a highway.

The present Cheever house on the Stickney farm was built about the time of the Revolution. The farm is supposed to include the north end of some of the river lots granted to the Cheevers in 1721, and absence of early deeds leads to this conclusion. During the Revolution a deserter from the British army found employment on this farm and one day while engaged in threshing, a file of soldiers who were hunting for de-

serters were seen on the road which now leads to Lawrence. Knowing his danger a messenger hurried to notify him of their approach, upon which he ran out of the barn across the fields and hid in the woods where he remained two weeks, until the danger was past, being supplied with food by sympathetic friends.

Crosby

The word Crosby is composed of two words Cross and By, meaning the town of the cross. Simeon Crosby was born in 1608, and sailed in 1635 for America in the ship *Susan and Ellen,* settling in Cambridge, where he died in 1639. One of his descendants, named Jonathan[1], lived at Billerica but later removed to Dracut, and married, Mar. 21, 1743, Rebecca, daughter of Dea. Edward Coburn[3]. The children of Jonathan[1] and Rebecca were:

Jonathan, born Aug. 5, 1744, married Mrs. Hannah Goodhue, daughter of Zachariah and Sarah Goodhue.

Josiah, born Jan. 11, 1748, died young.

Bette, born Mar. 12, 1752.

Benjamin, born Aug. 12, 1754. Killed at battle of Bunker Hill.

Josiah, born June 29, 1758, married Mrs. Thankful Hildreth. The term "Mrs." is not a proof that she had ever been married as this was applied to single women also.

Jonathan, Sr., Jonathan, Jr., Benjamin, and Josiah are on the Roll of Honor.

A son of Jonathan and Rebecca, also named Jonathan[2], married, in 1772, Hannah, daughter of Zachariah and Sarah (Richardson) Goodhue, and is on record on the town books as Jonathan, Jr. The father and son both served in the Revolution. Jonathan[2] died Oct. 20, 1813, and his son Jonathan born July 10, 1777, married Oct. 18, 1810, Hannah daughter of William Wood, who owned the farm which his son conveyed to the town for a town farm. It was probably Jonathan[2] who built the house in New Boston village, which, about 1860, was removed and the present one built.

Jonathan[2] and Hannah (Goodhue) were married Nov. 26, 1772. Their children were:

Hannah, born Sept. 20, 1773, married David Abbott.
Jonathan, born July 10, 1777 married Hannah Wood.
John, born March 3, 1781 married Meribah Rowell.
Rhoda, born May 18, 1783.
Phineas, born Apr. 24, 1788.

Jonathan[3] and Hannah Wood were married Oct. 18, 1810. Their children were:

Jonathan Cotton, born Aug. 5, 1811, married Lydia Cheever.
Hannah, born March 10, 1813, married Micah Colburn, Jr.
Maria, born June 20, 1815, never married.
Sewall Wood, born Nov. 10, 1817.
Martha, born Jan. 4, 1821, married Thomas Dana Coburn.
Benjamin, married Arvila Keyes.

The highway now passing Rockwood Coburn's house formerly ran several rods further to the east in what is now a field, and on this highway there was a house which was probably the home of Jonathan[1]; as it became the home of Jonathan[2] and was an old house in the time of Jonathan[3]. Jonathan[2] in his later years, 1800, gave a deed of it to his son Jonathan[3] making provision for himself during his lifetime. The farm, formerly known as the town farm, was owned by Hannah Wood and her brother, Samuel P. The farm was divided into the eastern and western halves. The line of division was from the center of the back of the house across the center of the kitchen, the center of the front entry and the center of the front door.

At his marriage, Jonathan[3] lived on this farm, the eastern half of which he sold in 1831 to the town of Dracut, and the same year, Samuel sold the western half. Jonathan[3] then removed to New Boston, and occupied an old house which stood near the site of the present Crosby house owned by his brother John, who married Meribah Rowell. It was also the home of an unmarried sister, Rhoda. The house was old and was torn down before 1860, and the site is now occupied by the present house. The cellar of the house in the field was in existence until recent years and when the field was cultivated the plow would turn out stones bearing the marks of contact with wagon wheels. By the laying out of the road passing the house built by Thaddeus Coburn, now Rockwood D. Coburn's, the

road passing the house occupied by Jonathan[1] was discontinued, this old road very likely ran to Jonathan Coburn house, later owned by John W. Peabody.

Frye

This family came to Dracut early, but at what date is not known. The vital records of the town give the marriage in 1758 of Timothy Fry and Hannah Calton of Andover. There was a large family of children, among them Jedediah, Timothy and Reuben. Jedediah[2], also spelt Jedidia, owned the farm north of Pleasant Street where Upland and Swain Streets are now located, which was later the Swain farm. Timothy, Jr.[2], was a soldier in the Revolution and he lived at the old house now standing on Pleasant Street, opposite Swain Street, later known as the Pollard house. He died November 6, 1811.

Reuben, a brother, was also in the Revolution.

Enoch[3] married, September 20, 1806, Polly Ellsworth of Gilmanton, N. H. He was a son of Timothy[2]. He died February 11, 1834, and is buried in the Hildreth Cemetery, where his father, Timothy[2], is laid. His son was Ellsworth[4] who was a stone mason, and, in 1831, lived in a cottage on Pleasant Street, adjoining the Post Office on the east. Timothy[4], George[4] and William[4] went West and settled there. James[4] was the only son of Enoch to remain in Dracut. He was born November 26, 1818, and married Harriet Lane. He purchased a house on Brookside Street, near the site of the Hamblett saw mill, and died at the age of 80. He was a brick layer by trade.

Fox

The name, Fox, is found in Ireland as early as A. D., 1033. Previous to this time and before it was anglicised the name was Shanach. It is one of the rare instances in which the surname is the name of an animal. Before the seventeenth century the "Book of Martyrs" was written by one Fox and this book and the Bible were the only books to which Bunyan had access when he wrote "The Pilgrim's Progress." During the same century, the name, in England, was spelled Fawkes, as it is recorded in history that in 1604 an attempt was made to

destroy the House of Parliament with the king by storing in the cellar barrels of gun powder to be exploded when Parliament was in session. The plot was discovered and Guy Fawkes, as leader, and others were arrested. For many years the day was celebrated annually in England, and even since that time the fifth of November has been known as Gunpowder Day. There were processions, illuminations and other features and a song was sung in which were the lines,

"Happy the man, happy the day
That caught Guy Fawkes in the middle of his play."

"Nov. 5 was celebrated in some of the Northern Colonies by fireworks, by burning an effigy of Guy Fawkes or by carrying about the village two hideous pumpkin faces supposed to represent the Pope & the Devil and then consigning them to a bonfire."

The English ancestor of the family was Thomas[1], who, in 1640, married Rebecca—and died in 1658. His son, Elijhalet[2], born in England, married, in 1665, Mary Wheeler, who died in 1678 and three years later he married Mary Hunt, daughter of John Stone and widow of Isaac Hunt. Nathaniel[3] was born in Concord, February 18, 1683, and his death is recorded in the Dracut records as occurring December 20, 1765, "in 82d year," presumably in Dracut, but Cutter, in his "Middlesex Families," states that he died at Concord where his gravestone can be found. He removed to Dracut, July 31, 1714.

When the Reserved Land was divided in 1721, he was assigned the eleventh lot on the river, east of Belcher's line. As these lots cannot be identified by their exact boundary lines, allowing an average width for the first ten lots would place this lot between McManmon's greenhouses and Varnum's Landing, now Bell Grove. There is no record showing that he ever lived on this lot, but as each one had lots assigned them according to value, it was often the case that more than one lot was given them, so a second lot was laid out to Nathaniel Fox and Onesiphorous Marsh. This was the first lot in the range of lots on Marsh Hill, bounded on the north by the Coburn New Meadows. Marsh sold his share to Fox. The lot



FRED A. FOX

(See Page 388)

is now owned and occupied by Frank P.[8] and Clinton W.[9] at the north end, and Eugene C.[8] at the south end of the original farm.

Nathaniel[3] lived on another range of lots known as the 200 acres and lying east of Dracut Center. His first wife was Hannah Merriam, to whom he was married January 11, 1710. They had six children, three of whom were born in Dracut. For a second wife, he married, October 18, 1760, Elizabeth Brown. Isaac[4], son of Nathaniel was born in Concord, February 17, 1712. He was twice married. His first wife, whom he married in 1738, was Abigail Prescott. He married the second wife, Hannah L. Blanchard, in 1755. His daughter, Hannah, born in 1746, married, in 1768, Ebenezer Varnum, whose farm was formerly owned by Isaac[4], and afterward by Prescott Varnum, later by Archibald O. Varnum, and in more recent years by George D. Coburn.

David[4], son of Nathaniel, born in Dracut, March 19, 1717, married Mary Colburn, great-granddaughter of Edward[1]. The line is Edward[1], Thomas[2], Josiah[3], Mary[4]. They had nine children. David received from his father, Nathaniel, the farm on Marsh Hill, which has since remained in the Fox family. He is on record as dying "in the army at Senecteda," Sept. 24, 1758.

His son, David[5], succeeded him on the farm. He was born July 8, 1751, and married Sarah, daughter of Capt. Stephen Russell. He, with his brother, Josiah, served in the Revolutionary Army and died in 1832. His son, Russell[6], married Hepsibeth Peabody, and purchased the Amasa Peabody farm on Marsh Hill which he left to his son, Dana R[7]. who was succeeded by his son, Daniel D.[8], and he, in turn, by his son, Everett B.[9], the present owner.

Samuel[6], son of David, was born September 7, 1786, and was twice married. His first wife was Abi Wilson, and his second was Dorcas, daughter of Eliphalet[5] Fox who was a brother of David[5]. He came into possession of his father's farm which he later exchanged with his nephew, Darius L.[7], son of Russell, and received from him the Levi Jones farm, which was originally the southerly end of the lot assigned to Nathaniel in the division of 1721. This was later owned by

his son, Samuel Adams[7] Fox, and now by his son, Eugene C.[8] Darius L.[7], at his death, left the farm to his son, Eben T.[8], at whose death it became the property of his widow, Martha (Hill) Fox, and her son, Clinton W.[9]

Eliphalet[5], son of David, Sr.[4], was born February 27, 1749; married, November 13, 1770, Elizabeth, daughter of Capt. Stephen Russell, a sister of the wife of David, Jr.; they had twelve or thirteen children. They lived at the Russell house on Pleasant Street, east of Hovey Square, which is now standing. The oldest son, Eliphalet, Jr.[6], married Rhoda, daughter of Jonathan and Bette (Hildreth) Taylor, and they were the parents of eight children, one of whom, Margaret[7], lived on Sladen Street and died in 1907, aged 93. One of her sisters, Harriet, married Life Webster, who lived at the westerly end of Dracut, which was annexed to Lowell.

Peter[6], son of Eliphalet[5], had a son Jonathan[6], who lived on the Methuen Road, also several daughters, one of whom married Nathan Thissell, Sr. Jonathan[4], son of Nathaniel was born April 28, 1719, and, in 1746, married Mary Barron. He died October 17, 1753, and his widow married William Colburn, Jr. He received from his father a farm of seventy-five acres to which he added by purchase. After 1800, it was owned by Reuben Jones until his death in 1808, when it ceased to be cultivated and is nearly covered by a growth of trees. The cellar is now in an open piece of ground about three-fourths of a mile south of the George Eastman farm, lately owned by George R. Fox and northeast of Loon Hill Road. Daniel[4], son of Nathaniel, was born February 8, 1722, and died September 20, 1769. His first wife was Mary Jones; his second, Mrs. Mary Durin, and his third, Mrs. Ruth Jaquith. He inherited the homestead and succeeded his father as deacon of the church.

In the public library of the town there is an old book, a combination of diary and account book, which contained a record of the children of Daniel[4]. "Jesse, born 1747-8, Feb 8. Abijah, born July 24, 1750. Jacob and Rachel, twins, born Oct. 1, 1752. Lydia, born March 30, 1755. Joel, born May 6, 1757, children of Daniel and Mary (Jones). Molle, born Oct. 14, 1761, daughter of Daniel and Mary Durin. Elijah, born Dec. 28, 1766, son of Daniel and Ruth (Jaquith)."

Elijah[5] married Mrs. Sarah Butler, and lived at Pelham, N. H. Abijah[5] and Joel[5] settled in Dracut, the first named on the homestead and the second, Joel[5], settled on the Curtis farm, which adjoins the home farm and which was owned by his son Joel[6], and grandson, James[7], who with his sister, Lydia, remained there during their lives. Abijah[5] married Mercy Harris. He was a deacon in the church and served in the Revolutionary army. He had five children, the youngest, Capt. Nathaniel[6], who will be remembered by the older residents of the town, inherited the farm.

The old house stood on the side of the road, as was the custom in those days, door yards being considered superfluous. This house was demolished and Nathaniel built a new one, placing it away from the road on the present site. This was afterwards burned and the present one erected. He married Fanny Richardson, daughter of Samuel, Jr., and there were eleven children, none of whom are now living. Milton[7] succeeded his father on the farm, which he enlarged by purchasing adjoining land. At his death, the farm passed to his son, Fred A.[8], and now is owned by his son Harold M.[4] Nine of this name were in the Revolution.

Capt. Nathaniel Fox, the sixth in descent from the English ancestor Thomas, came into possession of the farm which was owned by his ancestors. He was a practical farmer, ready to adopt new methods and to keep pace with modern improvements. He was not anxious to hold public office, although when his services were required in any duties, he accepted the trust and by his sound sense and good judgment performed these duties in a satisfactory manner. Possessing good executive ability, he was placed in command of a company of militia thus receiving the title of captain. Honored and respected by all, he passed from earth full of years and regretted by his townspeople.

Milton Fox was the son of Capt. Nathaniel and Fanny Fox, and became the owner of the home farm. Inheriting his father's good judgment, he continued improvements which had caused the farm to be a model farm and by purchase enlarged the farm to which he gave his time and study. He was especially successful in the raising of cattle and the production

of milk for the market. His broad acres provided large quantities of hay, which found a ready market in the neighboring city. He also raised many acres of cabbages which he sent to the Boston market. In common with his father, he did not seek public office, but was deeply interested in the affairs of the town endeavoring by his influence and example to promote its best interests.

Fred A. Fox was born March 25, 1846, and died May 22, 1907. He married, January 12, 1882, Mary Lizzie, daughter of Edward and Phebe (Hayes) Richardson. He became the owner of the large farm owned by his father, Milton, at his death, thus being the sixth in descent from the original owner, Nathaniel. He was a student at Gilmanton, N. H. Academy and the Colby Academy at New London, N. H. Completing his studies, he returned to Dracut to become the manager of his father's farm, thus gaining experience which enabled him, when owner, to become a successful farmer. He had no inclination to hold office in town or state, although interested in the welfare of the town. His children and grandchildren form the seventh and eighth generations to occupy the ancestral acres.

Darius L. Fox was a descendant in the seventh generation of Edward Colburn and Nathaniel Fox. Exchanging farms with his uncle, Samuel, he lived on the farm which has been owned and occupied by the descendants of Nathaniel ever since the laying out of the reserved land. The good spirit of his Revolutionary ancestors, David Fox, Jr., and Capt. Stephen Russell was shown in his quiet, unobstrusive life. He attended faithfully to whatever public duties he was called upon to perform. He will be remembered as a good citizen and a generous, accommodating neighbor ready to help in all good work.

Goodhue

The name in the earlier days was spelled Goodhew and Goodhugh, and within the memory of the present generation was pronounced Goody. William[1], when twenty-four years of age came from England and settled at Ipswich. He had two sons, Joseph[2] and William, Jr.[2]. Ebenezer[3], son of Joseph, was born 1685 and died 1747. He was the first of the name to live in Dracut. At the division of the reserved land in 1721,

he was assigned the first lot on the Merrimack River, east of Belcher's line. It was a tract of forty-six acres and was that land lying east of Beacon Street, reaching to the river. He held the offices of selectman, in 1712, and town treasurer, in 1714. He was an owner of other tracts of land as his name appears affixed to deeds shows. His son, Zachariah[4], born 1725, was in the Revolution, also his grandson, Zachariah[5]. The Goodhue home was at the Navy Yard village, where Zachariah, Jr., had an interest in the saw and grist mill which stood at the east end of the dam, where a one-story brick building is now located. May 1, 1793, he conveyed to Joshua Bradley 24/48 of saw mill and the same proportion of land "on which the saw mill stands where the grist mill formerly stood lately owned by Capt Hale deceased and myself." Aside from this ownership, the Goodhue family were farmers.

The later families of this name, in this village, were descendants of Zachariah[5]. They purchased outlying land and kept a large stock of cattle and horses. Enoch F. was an enterprising man and at different periods was farmer, butcher and tavern keeper, holding a lease for a short time of the B. F. Varnum tavern at the Center, where the fire department building now stands. His sons, Carlos A. and Cornelius, succeeded him on the farm and later Henry, the oldest son of Enoch F., had his home there. Henry, in his younger days, was engaged in whale fishing, voyaging to the Pacific Ocean.

Besides those already mentioned two more of the name of Goodhue served in the Revolution. The family which settled in the neighborhood of the paper mill was descended from one of the sons of William[1], viz., William, Jr. The first of this line living in Dracut was Moses who was in the fourth generation; born, 1752; died, 1824. His sons, Aaron and Daniel, succeeded him in the ownership of the mill property as described in the chapter relating to the paper mill.

Ralph Goodhue, formerly living in the Kenwood district, was a descendant of Joseph[2] another son of the immigrant. He was in the eighth generation, a son of Wadleigh[7], but none of his ancestral line resided in Dracut. He married, September 5, 1869, Juline Frances Miner. His daughter, Amy H., was the first librarian in the town library.

Hall

Richard Hall, in 1676, was a freeman living in Bradford, and the line commences with him. His son, Richard[2], was born February 6, 1676, and married Mehitable Barker, his son, Ephraim[3], was born February 10, 1717, and married Eunice ——. Ephraim[3] was the first of the name to settle in Dracut, and his farm, located on the road to Methuen, became the westerly part of the late George Kelley's farm. His son, Ephraim[4], was born September 3, 1741, and married Lydia, daughter of Stephen Russell. The date of intentions of marriage is March 9, 1765. He purchased property on Marsh Hill in the range of land in reserved lands, bordering on Colburn's new meadows, which remained in the family four generations.

His son, Phineas[5] was born January 1, 1768, and married Patty, daughter of Ezekiel and Martha Cheever. He inherited his father's farm, which he transferred by deed to his son, Ira[6], who was born September 30, 1804, and married April 26, 1831, Polly, daughter of Joel and Hannah Fox. Ira was active in the affairs of the town. He was interested in its development and as a town officer he performed the duties with good judgment and for its best interest. A descendant of the Revolutionary soldiers, Ephraim Hall and Capt. Stephen Russell, he inherited the privileges of that class of men who fought to establish our independence, and in his life he practiced those principles while performing his duties as a citizen and town officer.

Four of his children arrived at maturity, viz., Ira Volney, who resided at Acton; Leroy C., a merchant; Gayton M., for many years town clerk of Dracut, and Oscar A., superintendent of the Gage Ice Co. of Lowell. The family was represented in the Revolution by Ephraim, Sr.[4], and his three sons, Ephraim, Jr., Asa and Moses. Three more of this name are on the Roll of Honor as serving in the war.

Hamblett

William Hamblett was born in England and married Sarah Hubbard, a widow. The date of his arrival in this

country is not known, but in 1642 he was at Watertown, where he was one of the proprietors. He removed to Billerica in 1656 and to Woburn in 1679. His son, Jacob[2], was born at Cambridge about 1645, and married Hannah Parker. His son, Joseph[3], born at Woburn in 1681, married Hannah Cullen. Their son, Joseph[4], born at Woburn in 1708, married Susan Durrant and removed to Pelham, N. H. He was one of the first to settle on the territory afterward called Pelham. He was the first of the name to reside in Dracut, where in 1745, his son, John[5], was born, who, in 1772, married Elizabeth Perham of Dunstable. Joseph[4] owned land on both sides of Beaver Brook at Collinsville and operated a saw and gristmill, which, in 1773, he sold to his son, John[5], who conducted it until 1789, when he exchanged properties with Isaac Parker, taking in exchange the farm formerly owned by Dr. James Abbott.

The farmhouse, built in the style of the time, was two-story with the large chimney in the center and painted red. It stood on the Mammoth Road nearly opposite where the tenements of the American Woolen Company now stand. The house, in recent years, was demolished, but its site can be found at the present time. There was a family of seven children.

John[6], Jr., lived in Maine. Life[6], born, 1780; died, 1874; married, 1808, Rachel, daughter of John Bowers. He purchased the Stanley house at the Navy Yard and was a farmer by occupation. He, as justice of the peace, transacted legal business and served as selectman and held other important offices in the town. His son, Charles[7], was a mason by trade, but later he became a farmer and purchased the Bradley property on Hildreth Street, adjoining the Blanchard Hospital grounds. His sons, Albert[8] and Arthur[8], who were also masons reside in Dracut. George[7], the younger son of Life[6], was a blacksmith and lived at the Navy Yard, where he, at one time, operated the sawmill which stood on the brook below the bridge at the mill and between Brookside Street and "New England." He had one son, George Eugene[8], now deceased.

Theodore[6], son of John, was a wheelwright, and built and operated the sawmill just mentioned. His sons, Theodore H.[7], was a millwright, Daniel V.[7] was a carpenter and Warren C.[7]

was a manufacturer. He had other sons and daughters who never married. Theodore[6] purchased the Garrison House farm on Riverside Street, but, retiring from active life, he removed to the Parker Varnum House on Varnum Avenue, which he had bought. Peter[6], son of John, born in 1775, married Polly Goodhue, and inherited the homestead at Collinsville. His children removed from Dracut. The family was represented in the Revolution by Jonathan, who was a drummer boy at Bunker Hill.

Hildreth

The Hildreths came from England before 1643, as at that date Richard[1] Hildreth was admitted as a freeman of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. The name has been spelled in different ways as many of our names in New England have been changed to conform to present usage. A very common way of pronouncing it was "Hildrick."

Richard[1] settled at Woburn, then called Charlestown Village, where he was living at the date above mentioned. Ten years later, in company with twenty-eight others, "he petitioned Hon. John Endicott and other honorable magistrates at Boston for certain grants of land for Chelmford on the river Merrimack at a necke of land, next to Concord river near to Pawtucket, it being a very comfortable place to accommodate a company of God's people upon: that may with God's blessing and assistance live comfortably upon and do good in that place for church and commonwealth." [Reade's "Hildreth Family."]

His son, James[2], had a son, Ephraim[3], who was the first of the name in Dracut. In 1709, Ephraim[3] purchased of the heirs of John Alcock 1300 acres. The land on the north side of the river was not at first occupied by the Chelmsford settlers, as the river seemed to them to be a barrier to prevent settlement.

In Chelmsford, there were garrison houses and reasonable protection from the Indians. In the "Wildernesse" they would be exposed to incursions from the savages and the settlers were reluctant to overcome these difficulties. The success of the Coburn and Varnums, who came from Ipswich, was of value to others, as it showed that it was possible to live on the north side of the river.

The Indian War of 1675 was ended and the low price of land influenced the Hildreths to become settlers on the north side of the river also. The territory from the mouth of Beaver brook to Tyng's Island was controlled by the Coburns and Varnums; but the Russell grant on the east side of the brook was unoccupied. It had been divided in 1687, and the western half sold to John Alcock. This became the property of his two daughters, one the wife of Benjamin Walker of Boston and the other the wife of Ephraim Hunt of Weymouth. Portions of this property are in the possession of Ephraim's descendants. North of the 1300 acres mentioned, is the Billerica grant of 500 acres which he purchased.

Before settling in Dracut, he was a member of Capt. Tyng's Company of Snow Shoe Scouts who were in active service against the Indians. He acquired a large property, as after giving to his three oldest sons their proportional part of the estate before his death, there remained enough for the four younger sons. Gen. Reade in his "Hildreth Family" says: "The Major directed that his land in Tyngsboro on the Merrimack and his negro boy 'Cuffe' inventoried at £100 and enough lands and credits be sold to pay his debts and funeral charges. The inventory included 200 acres of land north side of the county road; 100 acres of land on Merrimack River; 50 acres of land bought of Gov. Belcher; 150 acres of land known as Winthrops Farm; interest in a corn mill on Beaver brook; sundry buildings and saw mill in Tyngs Town; land and meadows west of Gouldings brook," besides a large stock of farm animals.

His fourth son, Thomas, was in the French and Indian War in 1755, and died at Fort Cumberland, Md., Dec. 4, 1755. The circumstances of his death are related in Gen. Reade's "Genealogy of the Hildreth Family." "After the close of the third French or King George's War, 1748, the French established a line of posts near to the Alleghany mountains, which was the cause of George Washington's first, and pacific visit in 1753 to the French. During the following year, Major George Washington marched his command to the locality where Pittsburg now stands. The French troops near Fort Duquesne were at first surprised and defeated; but later defeated Washington

and forced him to capitulate and retire from the disputed ground then claimed by France. When General Edward Braddock was commissioned as commander-in-chief of all the English forces in North America in September, 1754, he had associated with him, as next in command, Governor Shirley and Sir William Pepperell of Massachusetts. In the spring of 1755, General Braddock appointed Washington to be one of his aides, but declined his advice as well as that of Benj. Franklin regarding the best method of utilizing the services of the raw American militia. The rendezous for the combined forces, the King's regulars and the colonial troops, was at Fort Cumberland on Wills Creek banks of the Potomac river, Alleghany Country, Maryland. In June, 1755, General Braddock marched against Fort Duquesne in command of 1000 regulars, 30 sailors and 1200 Provincial troops, besides a train of artillery. Gates, Gage, Morgan and Mercer, names that were to be famous in another war, were there, and there, too, was Ensign Thomas Hildreth, son of Major Ephraim Hildreth of Dracut. The defeat and death of Braddock by the French and Indians is a matter of history. The demoralized British soldiers who escaped the slaughter by Contrecouer and DeBeajeu's command and their wily allies, July 9, 1755 fled back to Fort Cumberland in a wild panic.

The Provincial troops protected their retreat and retired in a more leisurely manner, fighting from behind trees, just as Dumas and DiLigueris did.

Nearly all of the officers of General Braddock's regular staff were killed or wounded. Ensign Thomas Hildreth was one of those who reached Fort Cumberland alive; but there, under the gloomy pines of the dense forest, he died, and received a soldier's grave in the tract known to the Indians as the Shades of Death."

Ephraim[3] was one of the selectmen of the town, also town clerk, and held the office of Major in the militia. It was his intention to provide a burial place for the town but as he did not arrange for one during his lifetime, his sons, in 1752, gave a deed of the land for the Hildreth cemetery in fulfilment of the wishes of their father. He had ten children, three of whom were active in town affairs. Ephraim[4], Jr., held the offices of

selectman, town clerk and treasurer. Josiah[4] succeeded his brother in the office of town clerk, then, in 1769, another brother, William[4], served in the same capacity. In turn was followed by William[5], Jr., and later by Lieut Israel.[5] William[4] held the rank of Major in the militia.

The Hildreths were active at the time of the Revolution and names of six are found on the Roll of Honor as serving in the war. William[5], Jr., besides holding several town offices was General of the Mass. Militia and in 1809 was elected to the office of High Sheriff of Middlesex County. He built the house at Hovey Square, now known as the Blanchard hospital. Micah[5], son of William[4], was town treasurer from 1792 to 1795. Elizah[4], son of Ephraim, held office in the town. Lieut. Israel[5], son of Elijah, held the office of selectman and town clerk, also other offices, and in 1793, he represented the town at the General Court. He served in the Revolution as a privateer's man. Israel[6], Jr., became a physician and lived at the homestead near the cemetery. Further notice of Dr. Hildreth, as relates to his medical experience, will be found in the section on the physicians of Dracut. He was a staff officer by reason of his office as surgeon in the Fifth Regiment of Infantry Middlesex Militia Mass. Volunteers, Col. Jefferson Bancroft commander. As an orator, his services were in demand at Independence Day celebrations. As a man possessing sound sense and good judgment, he was chosen to protect the interests of the town in cases where their rights were threatened.

The following incident is related of his good nature: He owned a field which reached to Beaver Brook, and a townsman, plowing in a neighboring field, drove his oxen across the doctors field to give them water at the brook. The manager of the farm remonstrated and reported the facts. Soon after this the doctor, meeting the neighbor charged him with trespass which the neighbor admitted. The doctor then said: "If the field is full of cabbages you are welcome to drive your oxen through to the brook as often as you want to do so."

Fisher Ames[7] served the town as clerk and treasurer and was a Representative to the General Court. He owned the Hildreth homestead and was a successful farmer. Fisher Ames[7] was the only son who arrived at maturity; his sisters were Row-

ena, who married Henry Reade a merchant of Lowell; Sarah Jones, who married Gen. Benj. F. Butler; Susan, who married William P. Webster, a lawyer; Harriet, who married Franklin P. Hurd, Dolly Maria, who married Col. J. M. G. Parker, and Laura Wright, who married George H. Pearson who was agent at Pearson's Mills in Dracut.

Mrs. Rowena Reade in an interview relating to the Hildreth family furnished the following information:

Her grandfather, Squire Israel Hildreth, it was that built the Hildreth mansion then the only house, save that of Ryer Coburn, in that part of Dracut. There were other houses at the west end of the town, that of Col. Ansart, and at the east end of the town where Gen. Varnum still lived in the respect which his high service for his state and country universally invited.

Squire Hildreth was a tall man, with black hair which he wore with a queue, dark eyes and a commanding manner. He had been a privateer in his younger days, and had visited Spain and other foreign lands, so that his knowledge gave him distinction among his neighbors. One day the gunner of the privateer was firing a gun, when he twitched his head as if in fear, whereupon Capt. Newman shouted: "You do that again and I'll pitch you overboard." Israel Hildreth stepped forward, and, saluting said: "Captain, let me try; and if I fail you can pitch me into the sea." So Israel fired the gun with his eye steadily gazing along toward the breach, and was promoted to be chief gunner of the craft. But he nevertheless was a man of tender sympathies, and never could relate the tale of sinking a ship without breaking into tears.

He wore, on state occasions, knee breeches with silver buckles, presented by his old captain. He was a farmer; but directed the work done by the men and women whom he employed. His son, Dr. Israel Hildreth, and his family lived with the squire and shared with him his simple living. In the fall the cellar was filled to overflowing with potatoes, cabbages, turnips, beets, carrots and barrels of cider, and the woodsheds were filled with logs for the great fireplaces.

These fireplaces were very spacious, that in the kitchen being the largest of all, with its capacious chimney, its crane and its

flanking brick ovens. Fowls were roasted in tin "kitchins" before the fire, or else were hung by strings from pegs in the mantle; and all the pots were hung from the crane over the coals.

When the ovens were to be used, they were filled with fuel which was lighted and allowed to burn about two hours. The coals and ashes were then swept out, and the loaves of bread, or pies, or beans inserted, the doors were closed and the baking allowed to proceed uninterrupted until the alloted time had expired. Then what appetizing odors permeated the house as the oven doors were opened! "There never was such cooking; nor can there ever be any more," said Mrs. Reade.

The household duties were simple. There was the making of soap and candles, of cheese and butter and preserves, of pickles and corned beef, hams and sausages. And there was the weaving of cloth; for all the men wore home-spun, and the women, too, save that those who could afford it wore cloaks of scarlet cloth secured in England. The wool was cut from the sheep in the pasture and was carded, spun into warp and yarn, and woven into cloth on the loom in the back room. All this was done by experts in the several branches, assisted by the members of the family.

In addition to the farm, Squire Hildreth had possession of the "Sawpit" on the banks of the river where the Aiken street bridge now rests upon its northern pier; and the "hole" was the scene of busy seine fishing in the season. It used to be quite a diversion for the children to watch the fishermen haul in the shad and the salmon; although they were somewhat alarmed at the rough play and frolic of the raftsmen who gathered there to reconstruct the rafts which had been broken for passage through Pawtucket rapids.

There were no mills on the other side of the river, only a few farm houses, with fields and orchards; the future Lowell had not even attained to the village stage; for the only village was at Middlesex, where the canal and the glass works were. It was at Middlesex that the muster was held, a great day for old and young; for the young went to see how the old were trained in arms for the defense of their homes and country; and the muster always ended in a sham fight, a startling and

awesome presentment of actual warfare. There were such times in those days, what with the boiled chicken and "fixin's," and gingerbread in great cakes. And then there were the peddlers with their trays of sweets, their peppermints and molasses candies.

There were the training days, too, when the men of each town answered the call to arms for a day; and after drill in the field the men of Dracut would gather at Blanchard's tavern and drink their "flip," a mixture of beer, rum, sugar and water, stirred to foamy encouragement with a red hot poker, a sociable drink, but somewhat heady. There used to be wrestling bouts in the tavern, together with other athletic feats of strength and prowess; but rarely any fighting; for these farmers were peaceful folk and were only belligerent when their rights were assailed.

Town meeting was another time of relief from work in the fields; but in the homes it begat extra endeavor to supply the demand of hospitable courtesy; for every house that could afford to be so was open and every table was free, and most bounteous was the entertainment provided.

The Hildreths were by nature and training military men. In common with other young men of their time, they were required by law to become members of the militia and to denote a certain time each year to military exercises. A study of the lives of Richard and his descendants reveal conditions which present the names of Hildreth in connection with a large number of men holding commissions ranging from sergeant to general. The names of those bearing the commissions are as follows: Richard, Sergeant; Elphraim Sr, Ensign; Ephraim, Jr., Major; William Jr., General; Thomas, Ensign; Josiah, Captain; Micah, Lieutenant; William, Sr., Major; Israel, Lieutenant; James, Lieutenant; Jonathan, Major; Samuel, Captain. Among the grandchildren of Dr. Israel Hildreth, but not bearing the family name, there were one brigadier general, one adjutant general, one colonel, one captain and one lieutenant in the regular army.

Hovey

Daniel Hovey was born in England in 1618 and came to America, settling at Ipswich, when he died in 1695. He married Abigail Andrews. Daniel[2], Jr., was born in 1642 and married first Rebecca ——; at her death, he married Esther Treadwell. Thomas[3], born 1673, died 1748; married Martha ——. Thomas[4] born 1707 married Sarah Rust. Thomas[5] born at Ipswich in 1736 married Mary ——. He was the first of the line to remove from Ipswich, as he came first to Andover and from there to Dracut. His son, James Platz[6], was a soldier who assisted in the suppression of Shays Rebellion in 1787. Thomas[5] was a school master and, selecting Dracut as his home, he purchased, in 1759, of Joseph Colburn 275 square rods of land at Hovey Square, on which had been erected the frame of a house. This he finished and it passed by inheritance to James[6], his son, then to his son, George[7], and at his death it was owned by George[8] Jr. of Chicago. It was two story on the front, but, as was the style of the time, the long roof permitted but one story at the back, this roof later being changed to admit of two stories at the rear. The interior has undergone but little alteration, while the ell on the south end has been removed. This building was a tavern in the early days and was on the highway over which the stage coaches passed on their trips between Boston and Concord, N. H. Deacon Thomas[5] was active in town affairs and performed the duties to which he was called in an acceptable manner. He purchased in 1764 five acres of land of Jonathan Jones, thus enlarging his homestead lot on the east as far as Capt. Stephen Russell's farm line. Two years later he purchased of Elijah Hildreth 33 acres, which is described as lying "north of Blackbird Swamp and lying west on the townway from John Bowers' house to the house of Joseph Goodhue." This would be the lot of land lying between the rifle range and Hildreth Street. He died August 4, 1812, and is buried in the Hildreth cemetery. His son, James Platz[6], sometimes spelled Platts, was born July 21, 1767, and died November 30, 1831. He married his cousin, Rebecca Hovey, of Boxford. He had six sons, viz., William and Joshua, who were shoe makers, Horatio Nelson, a merchant, James P.

Jr., Cyrus, a silversmith, and George, a farmer, who came into possession of the home farm. George[7] was a deacon in the Congregational church for many years and held important town offices, being selectman and treasurer.

Jones

The name is of Welsh origin and is the same as John, which means gracious. No one of the name is recorded as receiving any portion of the reserved land and the time of their entry into town was probably later than the division in 1721. Old records state the following facts relating to this family in a list of emigrants to America 1600 to 1750.

"2 May 1635 The underwritten names are to be transported to the Barbadoes imbarqued in the Alexander, Capt. Burk and Gilbert Grimis, Masters certificate from the minister where they later dwelt the men took the oath of allegiance

Walter Jones age 20 years.
Morgan Jones age 31 years.
Hugh Jones age 22 years (born in 1613).
Edith Jones age 21 years.
Elizabeth Warren age 17 years."

Hugh[2], married, first, Hannah Tompkins, who died May 10, 1672. He married, second, Mary Foster, who, among other children had a son, Hugh[3], baptized in 1690, who married Hannah Wilson.

There were eight children, among them David[4], born 1716; Jonathan[4], born 1719; Nathaniel[4], born 1723; and Hugh[4], born in 1727. David[4] married Hannah Fox, David[5], born 1741, married Mrs. Molly Bayte; David[6], born 1771, married Nabby (Abigail) Currier of Pelham, N. H.; David[7] married Mary Seavey. They had two children Frank[8], who was a dentist, and Lizzie[8]. The other sons of David[6] were Cyrus[7], Darius[7], and John Lucas[7]. The last named lived at Pelham, N. H., where his son, Martin L.[8], now resides. Cyrus[7] inherited the home farm which is on a cross road which connects the two roads to Methuen leading from Dracut Center. It was later owned by his son, Charles



JOSEPH MORRISON WILSON

(See Page 426)

E.[8], who died in 1900, and the farm was afterward sold. Darius[7] never married. Jonathan[4], born 1719, married 1744 Hannah Barron. Their son, Zebediah[5], born 1753, married Mrs. Johannah Goodhue, and had sons Nehemiah[6], Thomas[6], and Zebediah[6]. Nehemiah[6] married Mary, daughter of Jonas and Dolly Richardson; their daughter, Rebecca[7], married Warner Coburn and lived on Hildreth Street. Zebediah[6] married 1807, Prudence, daughter of Jonathan and Mercy Richardson.

They had eleven children. Nathaniel[4], born 1723, married, in 1748, Jane Fletcher. Their son Nathaniel[5], born 1750, married Jemima, daughter of Edward[4] and Hannah (Butterfield) Coburn of Pelham, N. H. Bradley[6] married Sarah Harris. Their son, Prescott[7], lived at Dracut Center on the homestead formerly his grandfather Nathaniel's farm. Solomon[5], born 1753, son of Nathaniel[4], married Sally Danforth. Their daughter, Polly[6], married Simon Fox, son of Eliphalet Fox. Her sister Susannah[6], married Simeon Flint, and their daughter Mariette[7] married George Hamblett. Hugh[4], born 1727, married 1751 Sarah Fletcher. Among their children were Oliver[5], Olive[5], and Hannah[5]. Oliver[5] born 1762, married Dorothy, daughter of Daniel and Eunice (Hunt) Clement. Their daughter Dolly[6], born 1792, married Dr. Israel Hildreth. Lydia[6], born 1796, daughter of Oliver[5] and Dorothy, married Pascal, son of Peter Coburn, Jr. Hannah[5] daughter of Hugh[4] married Saul Coburn, and her sister Olive[5], married Thaddeus Coburn. Oliver[6], son of Oliver[5], born in 1789 married Olive Coburn. The birth of two sons are on the Dracut Records, Oliver Morgan[7] born 1815 and Thaddeus C.[7] born 1819.

Bradley

The first mention of the name is found in the record of the sailing of the ship from England which numbered among its passengers one Daniel Bradley. The entry, including the early spelling of the name, is as follows:

"8 April is 1635

Thies p'les [peoples] herevender mencioned are to be transported to New England: inbarqued in the Elizabeth of London

Wm. Stagg Mr. bound thither: they have taken the oath of Allegience and Supremacie p'r Cert: from the p'ish [parish] of St Alphage Cripple gate the minister there.''

Wm Holdred Tanner 25.
Roger Preston Tanner 21.
Daniell Broadley 20.
Isack Studman 30.''

In 1662, Daniel married Mary, daughter of John and Jane Williams, and settled in Bradford, where his two oldest children, Daniel, Jr., and Joseph, were born. Later he removed to Haverhill. He was killed by the Indians, or as the documents phrase it, ''Slain by ye hand of ye heathen,'' August 13, 1689, near the present Atkinson depot. They had nine children, the oldest, Daniel, Jr., with his wife and two children, Mary and Hannah, were killed by the Indians March 15, 1696/7.

Joseph Bradley[2] was born February 7, 1664/5, and died October 3, 1779. He married April 14, 1691, Hannah Heath. They had ten children, only one of whom will be in this record. April 19, 1697 he was sent with others to re-enforce the garrison, at that time commanded by Thomas Duston, whose wife was captured by the Indians, as related in local histories. He afterward was commander of the same garrison which was attacked by the Indians in 1703. He also led a scouting party, capturing the packs of a party of French and Indians, the loss of which resulted in their capture. His wife, Hannah, was taken captive by the Indians in 1696 and her two children killed. The manner of her release and return is not known.

In 1703, the garrison was attacked in the day time, when only one soldier was on guard, who was killed. The others were away as no attack was expected. Mrs. Bradley was boiling soap and defended herself by throwing it on the Indians and scalding them; but she was overpowered and taken to Canada.

In 1705, John Sheldon was empowered to go to Canada and negotiate for the release of the captives. His attendants were Joseph Bradley and a man from Deerfield. Their mission was successful and Hannah returned to experience more attacks by the Indians. In 1706, there was a night attack on the garrison when only the family and a hired man were the occu-

pants. As the first Indian crowded through the door, he was shot by Mrs. Bradley and the others retreated without further molestation. When captured the second time she had for fellow prisoners, Mrs. Dustan and Mary Neff; but being obliged to travel in advance of the others, she was not present when the two women killed the Indians and returned. The following document is on record:

"The Deposition of the widow Hannah Bradley of Haverhill of full age, who testyfieth & saith that about forty years past, the said Hannah together with the widow Mary Neff were taken prisoners by the Indians & carried together into captivity & above pennycook the Deponent was by the Indians forced to travel further than the rest of the captives & the next night but one there came to us one Squaw who said that Hannah Dustin & the aforesaid Mary Neff assisted in the killing of the Indians of her wigwam, except herself & a boy, herself escaping very narrowly, showing to myself and others seven wounds, as she said with a Hatchet on her head; and which wounds were given her when the rest were killed."

This was signed by Hannah Bradley by the making of her mark. This is a brief account of the captivity of one of those sturdy New England women whose descendants were prominent in Dracut but within its limits no one of the name is now living.

Their son, Joseph[3], married Hannah Marsh and they were the parents of Amos[4] the first of the name in Dracut. Amos came from Haverhill about 1761 and purchased the farm of Solomon Abbott, with the ferry, at Central Bridge, reference to which has already been made. His wife was Elizabeth Page, a great-granddaughter of Thomas and Hannah Duston. This was the Hannah Duston who was captured by the Indians and escaped. They were the parents of eleven children. Deacon Amos, as he was called sold his property on the river in 1809 to his son Joseph who operated it until he sold it in 1827 to the Central Bridge Corporation. He died Oct. 14, 1813. The five sons of Deacon Amos were Amos, Jr.[5], who became a physician, as already recorded. He married Lydia Jones, of Salem, N. H., and eleven children were born to them. His farm was on Hildreth Street adjoining on the north grounds of the Blanchard

Hospital. At his death, May 6, 1817, his son, Dr. Peleg[6], succeeded to his estate and his father's practice. Joshua[5] married Mary Poor, they lived in Dracut and had eleven children. Joseph[5] married Lydia Worcester and they had seven children. He owned the ferry at Central Bridge which he purchased of his father and kept a tavern in a building which he built on First Street and which still stands nearly opposite the ferry landing. He is said to have been the first to operate a steamer on the river making trips to Nashua.

Caleb[5], called Parson Bradley became a clergyman and settled in Portland, Me. He was twice married and left six children.

"Many of the older people will remember the kindly old 'Parson Bradley' who died a generation ago, but who for sixty years or more before was one of the best-known clergymen in New England. Caleb Bradley was his name, and he was a native of Dracut, Mass.

His style of preaching was florid and declamatory, his manner ardent and somewhat eccentric, but this was the result of his peculiar temperament, and did not rise from any lack of moral sensibility, for with all his vivacity he was a most sincere Christian and devoted minister.

A small volume might be filled with many quaint sayings and kindly doings of the famous old preacher. It was the custom for the minister when he closed the marriage ceremony to greet the bride with a kiss. Being called upon one occasion to marry two colored people, after performing the ceremony he said to the groom. 'Salute your bride, sir.' To which the negro replied, 'After wou, massa.' The good parson declined the privilege, and ever after abandoned the practice of kissing brides.

In 1857 Mr. Bradley attended commencement at Harvard college, and being the oldest clergyman present, he was requested according to custom, to ask a blessing at the dinner of the graduates, which he did in manner following: 'Almighty God, for past favors, for present enjoyment, and for future hopes, accept the best feelings of our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, Amen.' The brevity of this invocation was in striking contrast to many who had preceded him in that duty, and was greatly appreciated by the guests.

The good minister had a bluff, hearty manner, and, as was the almost universal custom among the clergy in the earlier days of his pastorate, partook of an occasional glass of rum. While calling one day on a parishioner of his, the good woman brought forth a bottle of rum and pouring out some in a glass put a spoonful of molasses in it.

'No sweetening,' said the minister, 'it needs no sweetening.' 'Why, Mr. Bradley,' she replied, 'it could not be too sweet for you if it was all molasses.' 'Well, well, pour it in, then,' responded the good pastor, always susceptible to flattery.

In the pulpit he had many little mannerisms which, far from detracting from the regard in which he was held, made him, if possible, more popular among his parishioners and acquaintances. On the occasion of the dedication of a school in Saccarappa, being called upon for the prayer, he responded, and ended with these words: 'Oh God, make this school as good as the Gorham school, and you know that that is not what it is cracked up to be.'

During an especially dry summer Parson Bradley was occupying one Sunday the pulpit of the Congregational church in Scarboro, and being requested to pray for rain, in his characteristic style he invoked the divine blessing in this manner: 'O God, send us rain, but you know that this ground needs dressing far more than it does rain.' The soil in that vicinity being rather poor suggested the coupling of this hint to its owners with his supplication to the Lord.

In his day the parson was politically a strong Federalist, and subsequently a Whig. During the administration of the democratic president, James K. Polk, the good minister was called upon to address a school in the town of Westbrook, and in trying to impress the boys with the importance of study, he called their attention to the fact that in this country any boy had a chance of becoming president of the Unitel States, and went on to say, 'Perhaps some of you may be a man as good as Washington, some of you may be as good as Adams, some one of you as worthy as Harrison, and the Lord knows that any of you may be equal to a Polk.'

On another occasion he was attending the funeral of the wife of one of the most prominent citizens in the town of Westbrook.

In the course of his prayer he said, 'Oh Lord, be merciful to the bereaved husband. Especially, Lord, we pray thee, to prevent him from making such a fool of himself as most men do who lose their wives.' ''

Nehemiah[5] married Lydia French and they had five children. He lived near Bradley's ferry and was the ferryman in the employ of his brother Joseph, he also had a shoemaker's shop. Another Bradley family resided in the town. This was Isaac Bradley, who was born in Haverhill in 1749, and came to Dracut where he married in 1772, ''Marget,'' daughter of Ephraim Hildreth. In the same year he bought of Ezekiel Hale a dwelling house on the south side of Pleasant Street, near the mills, then owned by Hale. The building stood at the crossing where the electric road crosses Pleasant Street and is a few rods from its former location, fronting now on Lakeview Avenue. In 1779, he bought of Hale 1½ acres of land between his house and Beaver Brook, with a scythe mill, water privileges, etc. This property passed to his son, Benjamin Bradley, who lived in a farm house between Lakeview Avenue and Brookside Street. Six members of the Bradley families served in the Revolution.

Parker

Deacon Thomas Parker, the Progenitor of the Parkers of Dracut, was born in 1605 and died in 1683. He came to America from London, England, in 1635, as a passenger in the ship *Susan and Ellin*, and the same year married Amy, whose surname is not known. He resided at Lynn two years, but, later, removed to Reading which, at that time, was being settled. His grave is to be seen in one of the old cemeteries of Wakefield, formerly a part of Reading. He was a deacon in the church at Reading and assisted in its establishment. He, with Deacon Thomas Kendall and Deacon William Cowdrey constituted the board of founders of the church. His good judgment and ability caused him to be elected to the office of commissioner and his duty was to act as judge in the trial of cases which did not properly belong to a higher court. There were eleven children and the Parkers of Dracut are descended from the third son who was known as Sergeant John.

The descendants of Deacon Thomas have taken an active part in the wars which occurred in the early days in the history of this country. In the Colonial wars he was represented by five sons, three grandsons, eight great-grandsons and twelve great-great-grandsons. On April 19, 1775, at the battle of Lexington and Concord, he was represented by six great-grandsons and twenty-three great-great-grandsons. In the Revolutionary war he had six great-grandsons and thirty-two great-great-grandsons. Among these were men holding every rank from private to general.

Sergeant John[2] Parker was born in 1640 and died in 1698. His home was in Reading, at a locality known as Cowdrey hill. In 1667 he married Hannah the fourth daughter of Deacon Thomas Kendall. By this marriage the name Kendall was introduced into the family. The only son of Deacon Kendall dying when young, the daughters agreed that their first born sons should be named Kendall, and thus in the early records the name of Kendall Parker appears frequently. Sergeant John served in King Philip's war in 1675 and 1676, and during the last named year he was wounded. While a farmer by occupation, his services were in demand as a surveyor. Sergeant John had thirteen children, and the fourth son, Johnathan[3], married, in 1706, Anna Flint. He died in Reading in 1746.

In their family of five children, the youngest was named Kendall, who was born in Reading, April 23, 1723. He married Mary Harris of Methuen, and with his brother Timothy[4] settled on land on both sides of the line between Methuen and Dracut. Four children were born to this couple and after the death of the mother he married Priscilla Austin and there were seven children by this marriage. It is from four of these brothers, viz., Kendall, Jr.[5], Peter[5], Jonathan[5] and Nathan[5] that the Parkers of Dracut are descended. The name of Kendall[5] is found on the Roll of Honor as a private in Capt. Stephen Russell's company, which hurried to Lexington on April 19, 1775. The next year he was a corporal in Capt. Reed's company, in Col. Varnum's regiment. It is an interesting fact that at Concord and Lexington, on that memorable day, there were twenty-nine men who were related to each other, mostly cousins, twenty-six of whom bore the name of Parker.

Kendall[5], Jr., was born April 4, 1752, and died April 6, 1807. In 1777, he married Mrs. Dolly (Jones) Richardson, daughter of Nathaniel and Jane Jones, and widow of Jonas Richardson. He was active in town affairs, holding the office of surveyor, collector and constable. In 1787, the selectmen ordered the treasurer to pay to them twelve shillings "to Deliver to Mr. Kindall Parker Junr for Expenses for man and Horses Carrying Provisions to the Army." His home was at the corner of Bridge and Pleasant Streets, where Cyrus Udell now lives. While living he disposed of his property to his children after making provision for his widow.

One of his children, Samuel[6], the youngest, lived at the homestead at the Center. He was born April 10, 1794, and died December 20, 1850. He married, April 19, 1821, Sarah Harris of Methuen. His occupation was that of blacksmith and his shop stood on the point of land formed by the intersection of Pleasant Street and Aiken Avenue, near the hay scales. There were ten children, among them Samuel[7], Jr., who died in 1865, and William F., never married. Benjamin[7] married Rowena M., daughter of Jonathan[6] Parker, and Levi N.[7], who married Sarah E. Noyes of Bow, N. H. A daughter, Sarah, who never married, lived at Dracut Center, and died at an advanced age.

Peter[5] was born in 1754, and died in 1809. In 1785 he married Bridget, daughter of Joshua and Hannah (Richardson) Coburn, the fifth in descent from Edward[1] Colburn, the first of the name in Dracut. His life as a Dracut farmer was uneventful, but his record as a soldier is honorable. Besides his service in the Dracut companies, he was in Capt. Wright's company in Col. Brooks' regiment at White Plains, and in Lieut. Flint's company in Col. Poor's regiment. His name is in "New York in the Revolution" and in the pay books of the treasurer of the State of New York. The company to which he belonged was in the battle at White Plains, in October, 1776, and the regiment commanded by Col. Brooks covered the retreat of the American troops. After the battle, he, with others, was selected to accompany the wounded to their destination.

Theodore[6] was the youngest of the eight children of Peter and Bridget. He was born in 1799 and died in 1865. He

married, in 1830, Lydia, daughter of Eldad Carter, one of the earliest settlers of Wilmington. She died in 1832, leaving a son, Theodore E.[7]. He married Frances Brackett, and their son, Theodore E.[8], married Harriet Talbot. Theodore[6] married a second wife, in 1834, Hannah, daughter of Deacon Moses and Mary (Derby) Greeley of Hudson, N. H. Their children were Mary[7] who married Leonard H. Morrison, Moses G.[7], and Adelaide, who died in infancy. He was an enterprising man and established blacksmith shops in Dracut and Andover. Inheriting the homestead, he managed his farm and conducted the business of blacksmithing at the same time. He was diligent, upright and honorable in his business relations, acquiring a competency which relieved him from care in his declining years. In those days the duties of a smith were more varied than at the present day. He must know how to shoe horses and oxen, iron sleighs, sleds and carts, fashion knives and carpenters' tools, and do all kinds of repairing in iron work. He was also an expert in the art of brazing iron and, what was far more difficult, he understood the silvering of iron, which required skill of a high order. He was an active and earnest member of the Baptist Church at Methuen, but he retained a love for the Dracut Center Church, where his father worshipped and always retained in his possession the old square pew until, with others, it was removed to give place to improvements.

Jonathan[5], son of Kendall[4], was born February 18, 1764, and died August 31, 1834. He married Alice Guttterson. Of the ten children, only two will be mentioned in this history, viz., Worthy[6] and Aiken[6]. In 1802, he purchased a farm of Josiah Wood, situated on the Methuen Road, north of the road on which his father's farm was situated. This farm he left to his two sons above mentioned. His house was the Parker Tavern and was famous for its hall in which were held dancing parties which were patronized by the young people of Lowell. He served in the Revolution in the companies of Capt. Russell and Capt. Varnum. His son, Worthy[6], born in 1803, married Mary Nudd, and owned the tavern building and the eastern half of the farm; while Aiken[6] owned the western half, where he made his home.

Nathan[5], son of Kendall, Sr., was born in May, 1776, and died September 2, 1852. He married, in 1801, Elsa Gilchrest. In 1800, he purchased a part of the homestead farm of Isaac Barker, situated on the crossroad leading from the Varnum cemetery to the Methuen Road. Six children were born, only one son reaching maturity. This was Nathan[6], Jr., who was born July 7, 1805, and died March 16, 1870. He married Fannie, daughter of Nathaniel and Anna Jones. He owned the home farm, and of his ten children, two only of the sons settled in Dracut, viz., William Sumner[7] and Bernice[7]. Another family by the name of Parker resided in Dracut.

The progenitor of this line was Abraham, born about 1612, and married, in 1644, Rose Whitlock. John[2], born in 1647, married, in 1678, Mary Danforth. John[3], born about 1683, married Deborah or Rebecca ———. John[4], born in 1711, married Hannah ———. Ephraim[5], born in 1738, married, in 1762, Sybil Warren. John[6], born in 1763, married, in 1784, Mercy Coburn, who was in the fifth generation from Edward[1]. The line is Edward[1], Joseph[2], Aaron[3], Aaron[4], Mercy[5]. Perley[7], son of John, was born in 1796, and married, in 1825, Sarah Grosvenor, widow of William Butler of Pelham, N. H. John M. G.[8] was born in 1826, and married, in 1852, Dolly Maria, daughter of Israel Hildreth. Another son of John[6] and Mercy was Asa[7], who was born in 1791, and married, in 1814, Elizabeth, daughter of Obadiah and Hannah Richardson. Two only of the fourteen children of Asa settled in Dracut, viz., John I.[8] who married Eliza ———, and Perley who married Mrs. Harriet Cole. One son of Asa[7], Obadiah[8], was killed by lightning while mowing in a meadow.

One of the younger sons was named Merrill Richardson Parker, and his adventures seem like a romance. Born in Dracut in 1837, at thirteen years of age, he went to New York, where he, as a sailor, made several voyages to Liverpool on the merchant vessels, named *Dreadnaught* and *Sidon*, and in the *Charlotte of Derby* to Newcastle, Shields and the North Sea; also to Bombay and Hong Kong. Returning to England, he left the sea and was employed in London by the Colt Fire Arms Co. At the commencement of the Crimean War, he enlisted in the 90th Light Infantry, and served in the English army, being at the

siege of Sebastopol in 1855, when eighteen years of age. He was present and took an active part in the battle of Balaklava and while stationed on a hill he saw the famous charge of the Light Brigade which the poet laureate of England, Lord Tennyson, so forcibly describes in the poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

"Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volleyed and thundered,
Stormed at with shot and shell.
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death
Into the mouth of hell,
Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there;
Charging an army while
All the world wondered.
Plunged in the battery smoke
Right through the line they broke.
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke.
Shattered and sundered,
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred."

As this was a war in which America was not engaged, the conclusion is that he had an adventurous spirit which led him into perils and dangers from which he escaped unharmed, and after his discharge from the army, which occurred October 1, 1856, he returned to Hartford, Conn., where he again entered the employ of the Colt Fire Arms Co.

The youngest son of Asa and Elizabeth was named Alfred F. He enlisted in August, 1862, in the 1st Conn. Cavalry and was present at the battle of Fredericksburg. The following year the company served as provost guard at Baltimore. They

were later ordered to the Shenandoah Valley and served under Gen. Phil Sheridan. He was at the Battle of Cedar Creek where the 6th Corp was in danger of being beaten by the Confederates under Gen. Early, but being assisted by the 1st Conn. Cavalry, the victory was won. He received his discharge from the army in 1865.

The spirit which prompted Merrill Parker to engage in a military capacity was inherited by his sons. His oldest son, Merrill, Jr., served in the late war and was badly wounded at the battle of the Marne, receiving injuries to arm and knee, which confined him in the hospital 16 months, but recovered and returned home. The second son, Roswell H., was a member of the 9th Machine Gun Co., who, after qualifying for the position of 2d lieutenant, was sent to France where he also took part in the battle of the Marne and was promoted to the office of 1st lieutenant. In this battle he received a gunshot wound and the enemy stripped him and left him lying in the rain. He was rescued by his men and recovered of his wounds and returned to America.

The home of John[6] and Mercy was on the southern slope of Marsh Hill, the house standing near the house of Eugene C. Fox, near the line of the Russell Grant, called Belcher's Farm Line and on the north side of the road. A slight depression shows where the building stood. When about 1825 the country road, now Bridge Street, was opened the present building became the Parker Home, the last of the name to occupy it being John I.[8], son of Asa[7] and Elizabeth. Perley[7], son of John[6], lived at Dracut heights, now Centralville, where he owned a farm and the same locality was the home of his son, John M. G.[8]

The Parkers came into possession of the land by purchase as their entry into Dracut was after the division of the reserved land. In the Proprietors' Record an account is given of land "adjoining Primes lot on Merrimack River, comprising 210 acres was laid out June 2, 1715, to Rev. John Higginson." In the Essex County records the transfer of this tract on June 27, 1715, from John Higgison, Sr., to John, Jr., is recorded. March 23, 1742. Timothy Parker, of Reading, purchased the rights in the Higginson tract. The deed recites, "This land

is the same as deeded to John Higginson, Jr., by his father, John Higginson, 27 June 1715,'' and quotes from an earlier deed, and described as a ''Certain Tract of upland and meadow Scituate within the Township of Dracut it being that Tract of Land which was granted unto me out of the Reserved Land in Dracutt by the Town of Dracutt and with the Consent of the major part of the Proprietors of the reserved lands my part being the thirtieth part of the whole reserved lands where of there is laid out to me one price of land containing two hundred and ten acres joining upon Dracut East Line and is in breadth one hundred and eighty poles from said Dracutt Line westward to a black oak tree marked and thence three hundred and twenty poles on a due north line and thence East northerly to Dracutt line.'' Also ''a certain piece of meadow, 15 acres of land laid out at the head of Dennisons brook. Also 317 acres east of Dracutt line laid out by the General Court.''

Two years later, Timothy sold two-fifths of the tract to his father, Jonathan. As this lot in Dracut joined another east of the Methuen line, granted by the General Court, the subsequent transfers must have included both lots. Timothy's brothers, John and Kendall, owned shares which were held in common until November 18, 1745, when there was a division. As only the descendants of Kendall, Sr., are in Dracut, the shares of the others were in Methuen or else were purchased by him.

In 1789, Kendall sold the land on the north side of the road to his son, Peter, and the tract on the south side to his son, Jonathan. In the deed the amount given is ''fourty acres'' and was ''a part of the farm called Higgersons farm.'' This later became the property of his youngest son, Theodore, who purchased, in 1826, the land on the south side of the road which Jonathan had sold to Peter Harris. Theodore was the last of the name to occupy the farm although a part of it was in possession of his son, Dr. Moses G., at the time of his death.

Among the professional men whose birthplace was Dracut and whose lives have been active and useful, Dr. Moses G. Parker occupies a prominent place. His ancestry from Deacon Thomas[1] has already been recorded. A brief sketch of his life was printed in the *Lowell Courier* from which we

quote: "He attended the schools of Dracut, the Howe School of Billerica and Phillips Academy at Andover, graduating from the Harvard Medical School in 1864. He immediately entered the United States service as Assistant Surgeon in the Second U. S. Colored Cavalry, and remained in the service until the close of the war, having been in engagements in Virginia, at Suffolk, Chickahominy, Jamestown, Wilson's Landing and Bermuda Hundreds. He volunteered to go on board the gunboat *Commodore Perry* during the bombardment of Fort Clifton on the Appomattox River when she burst her 100 lb. Parrott gun, and assisted the surgeon in caring for the wounded. After this he was with his regiment before Petersburg, and on July 30, 1864, was so near the explosion of the mine that he saw and heard the terrible upheaval that formed the crater. Later he was assigned to hospital duty and was placed in charge of the first division of the Point of Rocks Hospital, Va., containing 1,000 beds.

At the close of the war he received an honorable discharge and, in 1866, commenced the practice of medicine in Lowell, Mass. He soon became prominent in his profession and was elected a member of the staff of St. John's Hospital, a trustee of the Lowell General Hospital, and was twice president of the Middlesex North District Medical Society. He invented a thermo cautery in 1876, and becoming interested in photography, he discovered the rotary motion in the fire of lightning and was the first to show by photography that the electric current rotates. The discovery was recorded by the *New York Electric Club Review*, and *London Engineering* in 1888. Being interested in electrical science, he realized the value of the telephone and was one of the first to become financially interested in the Lowell District Co., in 1879, becoming a director in this and other companies and vice-president in the Boston and Northern Telephone Company. In 1883, when these and other companies consolidated to form the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, he became a director and member of the executive committee, which office he retained until his death.

He travelled extensively in Europe and in this country, having made an extended trip to the Northwest into Alaska

and south into Mexico. In 1892, he became interested in the Sons of the American Revolution and was a member of its board of managers. He was a charter member of the Old Middlesex Chapter and for two terms held the office of president. He was president of the State Society for two terms and in 1911-1912 was president general of the National Society, S. A. R. He was a delegate to the National Arbitration and Peace Congress in New York, in 1907, and a United States delegate to the seventeenth International Medical Congress held in London, England, in 1913. His death occurred at his home in Lowell."

Richardson

The name is, literally, like many others, Richard's son, Richard meaning of a powerful, rich or generous disposition. The progenitor of the Dracut family was Ezekiel, who came from England at an early date and settled at Woburn. His wife's name was Susanna and they were the parents of seven children, among them were Josiah[2] and James[2], who were the ones from whom the Dracut families descended. Thomas[3], son of James, married Hannah, daughter of Edward[1] Colburn, and settled near his father-in-law on Varnum Avenue. Josiah[2] and his son, Josiah[3], lived at Chelmsford. Josiah[4] was the first of the name to settle in Dracut, and at a general town meeting held October 27, 1712, leave was granted him to be a settled inhabitant of Dracut on the lot, No. 10, which his father took up with the consent of the general court. Josiah[3] died October 17, 1711. Vincent in his Memorial describes the lot as having "Merrimack river on the south, the Solomon lot on the west, on the north and east it had marked trees. It was one of the fifteen lots that lay between Mr. Belcher's farm and Mr. Winthrop's farm and near Walker's brook and was the thirtieth part of the undivided land in the township of Dracut." His occupancy of the lot is uncertain, for later he purchased land of Jonathan Belcher, on what is now Hildreth street in Centralville and where he resided until his death.

The limits of this history forbid a record of all the descendants of Josiah[4] and his wife Lydia——. Those who settled in Dracut will be mentioned. Of the twelve children, Ephraim[5], born November 12, 1722, married Elizabeth Richardson.

Ephraim[6], born December 27, 1745, married Eleanor Richardson and lived on the farm later owned by Jonathan Fox. His son, Ephraim[7], married Hannah Richardson. His son Ephraim Oakley[8], married his cousin, Sarah Varnum. Moses[5], born May 14, 1724, married Elizabeth Coburn. His son, Obadiah[6], married Hannah Hildreth. Obadiah, Jr.[7] married Rhoda Hazelton.

The daughters of Obadiah[6] lived in Dracut and died at an advanced age. Their names were Sarah, married Isaac Coburn, lived at Navy Yard; Hannah, married Ephraim Richardson; Clarissa, married Amos Boynton; Lydia, married Colonel Prescott Varnum; Sophia, married William Foster, Jr.; Elizabeth, married Asa Parker; Charlotte, married Reuben Coburn. The last named died at the age of 72, and the others at ages ranging from 80 to 94.

Merrill[7] married Mercy Wood. Their sons were John Merrill[8], born September 30, 1821; Increase Sumner[8], born March 3, 1824; Abel[8], born August 20, 1827. David[5] had a son, Reuben[6], who married Deborah Butterfield. They had sons, Reuben[7], who lived near the Hildreth Cemetery, and Levi[7], who lived on the Mammoth Road, above Collinsville. David[5] had a son, Thaddeus[6], who married Polly Currier of Methuen. Their son, Thaddeus[7], married Betsy M. Bradford. David[5] had a son, Samuel[6], born February 14, 1761, who married Prudence Wood. They were the parents of three brothers who were prominent citizens of Dracut. Samuel[7], Jr., married Hannah Varnum. Of their ten children, Phineas[8], Edward[8] and Calvin[8] settled in Dracut.

Samuel, Jr.[7], married in 1821, Hannah, daughter of Colonel Prescott and Elizabeth Varnum. He inherited the farm owned by his father, Samuel[6], but after his marriage he removed to the Ebenezer Varnum farm which he transferred to his son, Phineas, and his later years were spent on a farm in the immediate neighborhood on Broadway. His children were: Phineas, born in 1821; Edward E., born in 1823; Prescott V., born in 1825; Samuel W., born in 1828; Andrew, born in 1830; George Augustus, born in 1835; Calvin, born in 1837; Cyrus, born in 1840. Two children died in infancy.

At the present time only two are living, viz., Calvin, who for many years was a farmer in Dracut, but recently removed to the Pacific coast and Cyrus now living at Concord, Mass.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HOUSE

(See Page 199)

Professional life attracted Cyrus rather than farming which was the occupation of his brothers, and he entered Dartmouth College, from which he graduated in 1864. Deciding to enter the ministry, he became a student at the Andover Theological Seminary, from which he graduated in 1869. His first pastorate was at Plymouth, N. H., and after three years' service, he accepted a call to Keene, N. H., remaining there ten years. Receiving a call to a church at Nashua, N. H., he accepted it and was very successful as a pastor. The church at Nashua was one of the largest in the city and in the twenty-six years of his labors there, his ability as a preacher and his faithfulness in pastoral work endeared him to his congregation and the people of the city where he located and from which he removed in 1909. He has held important offices. He was a trustee of Dartmouth College for the term of fourteen years and from which he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He was also a trustee of the New Hampshire Home Missionary Society for twenty years. As a lecturer and orator, his services were in demand, and as a speaker in this capacity he was successful.

David[7], born April 16, 1803, married Fanny Varnum. Dana[7], born April 11, 1805, married Emily Swett. One son, Amos Tappan[8], lived in Dracut. Josiah, Jr.[5], had a son, Jonathan[6], who married Mercy Richardson. There were twelve children. Among them Jonas[7], born July 31, 1780, and lived at Hovey Square. He married Joanna Jones and the three children, Henry[8], Julia[8], who married Charles Hamblett and Justus[8], all lived in town. Asa W. M. Richardson was son of Asa, a descendant of Ezekiel[1]. The line is Ezekiel[1], James[2], Thomas[3], James[4], James[5], James[6], Samuel[7], Asa[8], Asa Warren Mansur[9]. He married Catharine Clary. He inherited his father's farm on Burns' Hill, but his progenitors lived in Pelham. The line of Oliver, who lived at East Dracut, is the same as the above except that it is James[6], James[7], Oliver[8], Almon[9], Melvin[9], Otis[9], now living in Dracut.

Varnum

George[1] Varnum's home was at Ipswich, and his son, Samuel[2], was the first to purchase land in Dracut with the intention of becoming a permanent settler. In 1668, he purchased a large

tract of land on Merrimack River, but as the Indians were unfriendly, as it was immediately preceding King Philips' War he at first located on the Chelmsford side of the river when protection was afforded by Hinchman's garrison and by Tyng's garrison in Tyngsboro. He cultivated land on the north side of the river, crossing in a boat for that purpose.

In 1669, Edward[1] Colburn, who had been Varnum's neighbor at Ipswich, purchased land adjoining Varnum's on which was a garrison house, and it became the centre of a settlement of which Varnum was a member. He had seven children, five of whom were probably born at Ipswich, as only the two youngest appear on the Chelmsford records. The two oldest children, George[3] and Samuel[3] were killed by the Indians while crossing the river with their father, the Indians being in ambush on the Dracut side of the river. There is no record of the death or burial place of Samuel, Sr., but his death did not occur until after 1702, as in that year his name is found affixed to a petition for authority to lay out the town of Dracut. Thomas[3], the oldest son, born in 1662, inherited the home farm. It is now in possession of Thomas, of the eighth generation.

The second son, John[3], born in 1669, was the first white child born in the settlement and when he arrived at maturity his home was in the vicinity of the falls where he owned a mill.

Of the eight children of John[3] none of the male line have been prominent in Dracut history, except Parker[4] Varnum, who, being familiar with legal business, was called Squire Varnum. His home was at the corner of Varnum Avenue and Old Meadow Road. He was interested in the erection of Pawtucket bridge and was clerk of the corporation until 1805. Joseph[3], born in 1672, located on the Indian reservation where a garrison house was built and which remained standing until recent years. This reservation included what is now the western part of the Navy Yard village and reached from Beaver Brook to some point above Pawtucket bridge and bordered on Long Pond. He purchased the Prime lot which was the sixteenth lot on the river in the Reserved Lands, in what is now the Kenwood district, which he deeded to his son, Samuel[4], who married Mary Prime. Their son, Joseph Bradley[5] Varnum, was very prominent in the affairs of the town. Inheriting the farm, he became a successful farmer

and his grave is in the Varnum cemetery. He commanded a company of Dracut men in the Revolution and remaining a member of the State militia, he afterward attained the rank of Major General. He became a member of Congress, representing the district when the 4th National Congress assembled at Philadelphia, and upon the removal of the seat of government to Washington, he was elected Speaker of the House. Previous to this time he represented the town in the general court of the state.

The Varnums were influential in the early history of the town. Recognizing the value of the water privileges at the falls, they secured the land on Merrimack river and Beaver Brook, on the former of which they were the owners of valuable fishing rights. With the Colburns, the Varnums share the honor of being the pioneers in the settlement of the town.

Joseph[3] had sons, Joseph[4] and John[4]. Joseph[4] had a son, Bradley[5]. Bradley, Jr.[6], had a son, Charles[7], whose sons, Joseph B.[8] and Charles[8], lived in Lowell, while the son of Charles[8] is Thomas[9], now a resident of Chelmsford.

General James M. Varnum

James M.[5] was the oldest son of Samuel[4], who purchased the Prime lot on Merrimack River, and whose wife was Mary Prime. His brother, Joseph Bradley[5], inherited the home farm, while James received his share by being provided with a liberal education. From the schools of Dracut he entered Harvard College, where he remained one year and removed to Rhode Island College, since known as Brown University. After graduation he taught a classical school for a short time and then studied law in the office of Hon. Oliver Arnold, the attorney-general of Rhode Island. He married a daughter of Hon. Cromel Child, of East Greenwich, Conn., and resided at that town where he afterward entertained Generals Washington, Greene, Sullivan and others.

In 1774, he was elected colonel of the Kentish Guards, and as colonel of a regiment of Rhode Island infantry, he marched to Boston to take a part in the war for American independence. He bore an honorable part in the war, being present at the battle of White Plains. He was promoted to brigadier general in the Continental Army and in November, 1877, was ordered by General Washington to take command of Fort Mercer, Red Bank

and Fort Mifflin. The next year he returned to Rhode Island and took part in the defence of the state. His military career ended the next year, 1779, when he resigned and was chosen a member of the Continental Congress. He served in this body during the years 1786 and 1787, when the Northwest Territory being opened, he was appointed one of the judges of this territory.

In those early days public conveyancers were not introduced in the unsettled regions and the long journey was made, with only one companion, on horseback. He became very popular, as his education and natural ability enabled him to enter upon his duties and perform them to the satisfaction of the Government and to the people of the territory. But his health failed, he was obliged to relinquish his duties and he passed from earth in 1789 at the age of forty-one. This brief sketch is taken from a paper prepared by the late George B. Coburn and read before the Lowell Historical Society.

Benjamin Franklin Varnum

Benjamin Franklin, the youngest son of General Joseph B. and Molly (Butler) Varnum, was born April 11, 1795. From the district school he attended the Westford Academy, where he graduated and for a short time he taught school in the district where he formerly was a pupil. When 18 years of age, he went to Washington, where his father was a senator, and for a brief period, he was clerk of a committee. The duties were of a nature to be pleasing to him, as in his later life, he was successful in similar pursuits. But home duties demanded his presence, as his four older brothers, disliking a farmer's life, had gone out into the world and held honorable offices in state and nation. The life of a farmer was distasteful to him and his inclination was to follow his brothers into public life, but there was no one left to attend to the farm and care for the parents in their declining years, and laying aside his own inclinations, he accepted the trust.

The citizens of the town, realizing his ability, chose him for one of the selectmen, and in 1824 and 1825, he represented the town in the Legislature as Representative and the district as Senator in the six years that followed.

His duties as a farmer did not prevent his study of other professions, as he acquired the knowledge of surveying and when in 1826 the question of the boundary of the states, which had never been definitely settled was resumed, as related in a former chapter, he became a member of the commission from this state to determine the location. The duties of this commission did not produce definite results, but the work performed by him was so satisfactory that it had a great influence upon the final settlement many years after his death. He was employed by the town to survey the streams, ponds and highways, an account of which may be found in another chapter. This survey was of great benefit to the town, as it preserves much that is valuable in the history of the town.

The duties of the County Commissioners were at first performed by the Court of Sessions, but in 1828 this was abolished and a Board of Highway Commissioners, afterward known as County Commissioners, came into existence. He became a member of this first board on which he served until 1831, when he resigned to become high sheriff of Middlesex County, an office which he held for two terms of five years each.

He served as clerk and executive officer of the Central Bridge Corporation when incorporated, and he foresaw the wonderful changes which were to take place in a few years. His home was on the heights in Centralville overlooking the river and he had planned an extensive water system, which was abandoned at his death. In 1820, he married Caroline, daughter of Joseph Bradley, whose father, Amos, purchased the ferry in 1761, where Central bridge now stands. She was eminently fitted to become the wife of one of the prominent men of the County, and she will be remembered for her many virtues. His ambition led him to desire higher offices which he intended to endeavor to secure when his term of Sheriff had expired, but all earthly honors ceased when on January 11, 1841, his life ended.

Adjutant General John Varnum, son of Colonel Prescott and Lydia (Richardson) Varnum, was born May 18, 1823. He received his education in the district schools of Dracut and chose for his life work the occupation of carpenter. At the termination of his apprenticeship, he soon became a contractor, a busi-

ness which he followed until the opening of the Civil War in 1861. He enlisted early in the war and was promoted to the rank of captain of a company of colored infantry, and at the close of the war, he became a resident of Florida. He represented his district in the State Legislature and was chosen adjutant-general of Florida.

Henry Varnum, the seventh in descent from George, who lived in England, was the youngest son of Colonel Prescott and Lydia (Richardson) Varnum. He was a worthy citizen of the town, and while possessing sound judgment and good reasoning faculties, he had a retiring disposition, one which did not seek public office while well fitted for the duties. He was a farmer by occupation. He held the office of superintendent of highways several years and his services met the approval of the town. As superintendent of the town farm, he managed the affairs economically and with good judgment.

Jeremiah Varnum was a descendant of Samuel, who, with Edward Colburn, came from Ipswich and settled in the wilderness afterward called Dracut. He was a worthy citizen of the town and while not holding office, endeavored in every way to promote the interest of the town. By occupation he was a farmer and his home was on Varnum Avenue near his birthplace. As a young man he was familiar with this locality when there were only a few farm houses where Lowell now is situated. He was an earnest active Christian and his daily life proclaimed the fact that he was a faithful follower of the Master, whose teachings and example it was his desire to follow. He was for many years a deacon in the Pawtucketville Church and he is buried in the Woodbine Cemetery.

Peabody

The name is an English name and found in the early records of England, in 1520, spelled Paybody. The Peabody genealogy states that: "The name itself was variously spelled even in the same parish and on the same document. The oldest and most prevalent form previous to the settlement of New England was Paybody. Two common words these syllables are, and perhaps they point back to a man or a succession of men

in the fourteenth century (when surnames were chrystalizing) who paid the servants. Body meant person or individual, paybody would carry the same idea as paymaster or paying teller.''

The same authority given the spelling as Pabare, Paybodey, Paybodye, Pebody, Pebboddy, Paibody, Pabody and Peabody. Another writer records as follows:

''The original name was Boadie, and the founder of the family, at the instigation of Boadicea, Queen of the Britons (who was publicly whipped before her grown up daughters by the order of the bloody Emperor Nero in the year 61), made a raid upon the tyrant, and even ventured into his palace and carried away the miniature picture of his wife Poppea, which was retained in the family till about the eleventh century. By this daring exploit and others, which much pleased the rulers of that day 'Pea' which signified a large hill or mountain, big man, mountain man, was added, and as then spelled was 'Peabodie.' ''

Lieut. Francis Peabody was born in St. Albans Hertford Co., England. When 21 years of age he, in the year 1635, having received a certificate of good character from the minister of his parish and been examined for emigration, sailed for America in the ship *Planter*. He lived at Ipswich until 1639, when he removed to Hampton, N. H., where he resided 18 years. He then removed to Topsfield, where he became a member of the board of selectmen and served as town clerk. At a town meeting held March 4, 1664 the town voted to ''give liberty to Lieut. Francis Peabody to set up a grist-mill and to flow so much of the town's common as is needful for a mill so long as the mill does stand and grind for the town.'' His home was a few rods from the spot where his mill stood. He was probably a brother of John[1] who also came from England at that time.

John[1] was born in England, and came to this country about 1636, and lived at Duxbury. Francis[2], born in England about 1612, married Mary———. William[3], born at Hampton, N. H., married first Mary Brown and second Hannah Hale. Ephraim[4], born in Boxford, married Hannah Redington. Nathaniel[5], born at Boxford in 1727, died August 17, 1778; married Hepsibah Barker of Andover. He was a soldier in the Revolution.

His widow came to Dracut, and with her son, Amasa[6], purchased of Daniel Hardy the land on Marsh Hill, a part of which was until recently owned by the descendants of John[1]. Nathaniel[6], born in Boxford in 1767, died in Dracut in 1844. He married Elizabeth Cole. Nathaniel[7], born in 1792, married, in 1822, Mary Gilchrest, and died in 1857. There were nine children in this family, all but two arriving at maturity.

Nathaniel[8] married first Elizabeth Blackwell and second her sister Nancy, widow of Jonathan Clough, and died January 25, 1917. John W.[8], married Helen M. H. Colburn, and his home was formerly at New Boston village, but at present writing he lives at the Navy Yard Village. Moses[7], married Hannah J. Gregg of Windham, N. H., and at his death left three children. The son, Henry F.[8], lived at the homestead and died in 1914. Ephraim[7], married Sarah P. Davis of Acton, and died in 1858, in California, leaving one son, Benjamin H.[8], who died in Lowell. The Peabody farm laid in the range of lots in the reserved lands, south of the Colburn New Meadows and north of the Cedar Pond road.

In the division of the farm, the Widow Hepsibah had the eastern half and her son, Amasa[6], the western part, the last named was purchased later by Russell Fox. Hepsibah, in 1813, transferred her part to her son, Nathaniel[6], who, in 1833, divided the farm between his sons Nathaniel[7] and Moses[7]. Nathaniel[7] conveyed his share in 1846 to his son Nathaniel[8]. Henry F.[8] inherited the eastern part at his father Moses'[7] death, as before mentioned.

Thissell

The name is often spelled Thistle and the families of both names claim relationship, as it was not unusual for one branch of a family to continue the original spelling and the other branch to change it. Richard Thissell and wife Abiah, came from Beverly, and in 1750 purchased land on Christian Hill of John and Olive Coburn, who owned a large tract on the southern part of the eastern half of the Russell grant, this half being known as Belchers. In a deed given 1768 from John

White to Solomon Abbott of 110 acres, it is described as bordering on a townway that leads from the road to Bradley's Ferry to Richard Thissell's land, the road to Bradley's Ferry being the present Bridge street.

The Thissell farm which can be located was in the vicinity of the lower resevoir bounded on the west by Beacon street and until recently remained in the possession of the descendants of Richard.[1] Joshua[2] son of Richard and Mary (Mears) second wife, had sons, Nathan[3], Joshua[3], and Daniel[3], who settled on this farm, but none of the name are left in the town.

There were three of the name in the Revolution one of these being Joshua[2] the father of the three last mentioned, who married Lydia Mears of Billerica. Nathan[4], son of Nathan[3], inherited the homestead on the road to Methuen, later Methuen Street, and John Wallace[4], son of Daniel[3], married Mary A. Fox, and lived on Broadway. His occupation was that of farmer.

John Wallace Thissell was the son of Daniel and Prudence G. (Varnum) Thissell. He was born in Dracut September 4, 1826, and died in 1916. He resided in Dracut until a few years before his death when he removed to Lowell. His occupation was that of a farmer and his skill in farming enabled him to acquire a competence. He was interested in the affairs of the town although he preferred to not hold office. He was a consistent member of the Church at Dracut Center and was active in assisting and promoting every movement for the benefit of his fellowmen. Kind hearted and broad minded he won the respect of all who knew him.

Webb

As the first white man to become a resident on the soil of Dracut, but not, as we have reason to believe, as a permanent settler, but as a speculator in the wild lands of the "Wildernesse," John Evered alias Webb is entitled to a place in these biographical sketches. His early home was in Marlborough, Wiltshire, England, and he was in Boston as early as February 9, 1634, when he was admitted to the church, being then called a single man. He was made a freeman in 1636 and lived as

a merchant in Boston for several years, owning the site of the "Old Corner Book Store" on School Street. He removed to Chelmsford after 1650, where he trafficked with the Indians, and assisted in locating land grants. He was ensign and captain of a Chelmsford military company and a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, and served as a Deputy from Chelmsford in the General Courts of 1664 and 1665. In 1659, with three of his military associates, he was granted 1000 acres of land on the north side of the Merrimack River, as described in the chapter on Early Grants.

Webb bought the shares of the others and located on his property, which he called Drawcutt or Draycott-on-the-Merrimack. He later had a grant of 500 acres on the east of Beaver brook, besides other grants in Dracut and by purchase acquired the Dummer grant in Tyngsboro. He was the owner at one time of about 3000 acres, the greater part of which was purchased by Edward Colburn and Samuel Varnum. In 1668, the year in which Varnum purchased his land, Webb was drowned in Boston harbor. Rev. Samuel Danforth of Roxbury states as follows: "17th 8th month 1668 Mr. John Webb alias Evered was drowned, catching a whale below the Castle. In coiling ye line inadvisedly he did it about his body thinking the whale had been dead, but suddenly She gave a Spring and drew him out of the boat. He being in the midst of the line but could not be recovered while he had any life."

At his death, his widow, Mary, sold to Edward Colburn all the real estate that remained after her husband's death which included the Colburn New Meadows North of Marsh Hill. Captain Webb was successful in gaining the good will of the Indians and secured from them titles to his lands which later was to be a part of the township of Dracut.

Wilson

Joseph Morrison Wilson's birthplace was at Boscawen, N. H., but his residence, since he arrived at the age of three years, has been in Dracut and the portion of Dracut now within the Lowell limits. He has served two terms as Representative to the General Court and served four years as councilman under the

old city charter. He has been active in every movement which would lead to better conditions in Pawtucketville. He has made a thorough study of the Indian History of the Merrimack valley, and his contribution to the chapter on Indian History in this work is of great value as it presents clearly the earliest history of this race of people.

Wood

Solomon Wood, of Bradford, had lots in the reserved lands laid out to him in 1710 to 1721. None of his children's births are recorded on the town books and it is not known that he ever became a resident of the town. The ancestor of the greater part of the family of that name in Dracut was Benjamin[1], who came from Bradford. He was born in 1687 and died in 1755. He had several lots of land laid out to him, on one of which he settled. He married first Elinor ———, second Mary ———, third, in 1744, Ruth Merrill.

According to his will we learn the children's names, Joseph, Benjamin, Stephen, Ebenezer, Simeon or Simon, Josiah, Abigail, Elinor and William. To the last named he bequeathed the homestead on Broadway, afterward purchased by the town for a town farm. Stephen[2], born in 1722, located on Christian Hill, and married Jane Phillips. Their son, Solomon[3] enlisted at the age of 19 and was in Captain Peter Coburn's company at Bunker Hill. He married Eunice Hall, and his home was on the old Methuen road between the present Fay place and Methuen street. Their daughter, Eunice, married Guillaume Louis Rose Fortune Berson.

Mons. Berson had an eventful life. Born at Port-au-Prince, in the island of St. Domingo, June 21, 1780, he was sent to college in Paris, but on account of the insurrection of negroes in St. Domingo and the Revolution in France, he lost his property and was obliged to earn a living by manual labor. When he was twenty years old, he enlisted in the French navy and was taken prisoner by the English, who at that time were at war with Napoleon Bonaparte, and carried to Guiana. There he was exchanged and made armorer on the *Berceau,* which was a corvette carrying twenty-four guns. The United States

and France being antagonists at this time, his vessel was captured by a British sloop of war and brought to Boston, at which place he left the navy and having previous to enlistment learned the trade of watchmaker and jeweller, he resumed this occupation.

At this time all work of this nature was, like shoemaking, performed by hand and he could locate in a small room and manufacture his wares. Eunice Wood, with her sister, Persis, were employed in Boston, and, becoming acquainted with the young Frenchman, Eunice became his wife and they removed to Dracut, locating in the Benjamin Hovey house at Hovey Square. The birth of a son, Guillaume, born July, 28, 1805, is recorded in Dracut. He later removed to Salem.

Mr. E. Henry Wood in "The Genealogy of the Wood Family," says: "In 1815 he sold out in Salem and started with his family for the West Indies on the schooner *Elizabeth* with the purpose of improving his fortune. It proved an unfortunate undertaking. They arrived safely at Guadaloupe, but sickness compelled them to return at a season when our sea coast is liable to be visited by terrific storms of wind and rain. The captain and mate died of yellow fever, leaving the second mate and Mr. Berson to manage the schooner alone. It was then their fate to encounter one of these storms, which lasted forty-eight hours, during which many things were thrown overboard to lighten the vessel, among which it appears was the chest containing the family Bible with the family record. All hope seems to have been lost. The father gathered his little family about him and commended them to the safe keeping of the Great Father who rules the storm and watches over his children. But the end was not yet come. The critical moment passed; the storm subsided and the vessel was able to reach the port of Norfolk, Va."

Here his wife died thirteen days after their arrival. He removed to Blountsville, West Tennessee, where he died January 25, 1856. Many of his immediate descendants, sons and grandsons became jewellers. Simeon[2] served in the French and Indian war, and was among the English soldiers who was present at the dispersion of the Acadians, as described in the chapter relating to wars. Josiah[3], son of Stephen[2], married

Mrs. Salla Wood, and their son Josiah[4] married Martha——— and kept a store at Dracut Center. His son, Benjamin F.[5], married Elizabeth Durant and lived on a farm on Greenmont Avenue. They were the parents of George H., and Millard F. Wood of Lowell.

William, son of Benjamin[1], inherited his father's farm and married Abigail Fox. His son, Samuel F.[3], and daughter, Hannah, who was the wife of Jonathan Crosby[2], sold the farm to the Town of Dracut, and it became the town farm. Amos[2], son of Ebenezer[2], married Mercy Whiting, and lived on Christian Hill, near the upper reservoir. Micajah[4], his son, was born in 1793, and married Rachael Richardson. They also lived on the same hill. The cellar of the house may be seen east of Mount Pleasant Street. Samuel[4], another son of Amos, born in 1786, married first Harriet daughter of Colonel Lewis Ansart and second Patience Kendall. He kept a grocery store at Dracut but later removed to Lowell, and engaged in teaming, conveying the products of the mills to Boston and bringing back merchandise for the stores, as this was before the steam roads existed. His son, Samuel N.[5], was born in Dracut and was a dealer in grain and flour in Lowell. Six of the name were in the Revolution.

Solomon[3] and Eunice were the parents of twelve children. Among them were Solomon[4] and Stephen[4]. Solomon married, in 1806, Ruth Welch. In his endeavors to earn a living for his family, he removed from place to place, and finally went West to start anew in a new country. But it was not home for them and they removed to Dracut in 1820, settling in the part now annexed to Lowell. Having lost his wife by death, he married again; but as the second marriage was not of an agreeable nature, he made his home with his daughters, dying in 1868. Stephen[4], married Chloe Fox, and lived on Marsh Hill. He died September 9, 1849, aged 61 years. Their children were Stephen, born 1818; Ephraim, born 1819; Elizabeth R., born 1816; Solomon, born 1823; Eliphalet F., born 1824; William.

Russell

Russell, or Rousel, is said to be from the French and means red haired or complexioned. The English Russells are

probably descended from John Russell, Duke of Bedford in the reign of Henry VIII. (Dixons surnames). The family line in America is:

1. John lived at Woburn; died 1676; married first, Elizabeth ———, who died in Woburn in 1644; married second, Elizabeth Baker.

2. John, born 1661; died 1680; married Sarah Champney. They had seven children.

3. John, married 1682 Elizabeth Palmer. They had eleven children.

4. Stephen, born 1687; married Ruth Harris.

5. Stephen, born 1722, died June 3, 1800; married Abigail Gage of Bradford, October 25, 1743.

Children: Lydia, married Ephraim Hall; Abigail, married Simeon Coburn; Sarah, married David Fox, Jr., Elizabeth, married Eliphalet Fox; Pate or Pattey died at age of five years; Stephen, died at age of two years.

Among the many parcels of land purchased by Stephen Russell, Jr., Blacksmith, the earliest, is dated February 14, 1755, and consisted of four acres near the land of Joseph Colburn, Jr.'s homestead, which was later the Hovey house at Hovey Square, and as no buildings are mentioned, it seems evident that he built the old house now standing on Pleasant Street, east of the square.

He was a large and fine looking man and must have made a good appearance as captain of the Dracut company, which was in the battle of Bunker Hill. He was one of the company of Dracut men who conveyed timber to Newburyport by means of rafts on the river. He had mechanical skill and a table made by him is in the Dracut museum. He is reported to have made a violin in one day and played on it at a dance in the evening. His daughers were musical, each taking one of the four parts, Abigail singing base. He was kind and gentle and a lover of children, and when they "made their manners," as it was called, he would say they were good children.

The record of his funeral services is taken from the *Independent Chronicle* printed in Boston under date of June 9, 1800:

Stephen Russell

"Departed this Life at Dracut, on the 3d inst after a short but painful illness, Capt. Stephen Russell in the 78th year of his age. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a tender parent, a benefactor to the needy, and a friend to mankind. His ingenuity, honesty & industry in his various pursuits in life, contributed much to his usefulness in society. The citizens of the town, anticipating the part which duty might require them to act in defense of their Country's Rights in the late Revolutionary War, early made choice of him as their military commander, which he cheerfully accepted, and for many years discharged the duties of that office at home and in the field of action, with reputation to himself, and honor to his country. He was a true friend to order and good government; but a steady persevering opposer to tyrranny and usurpation.

He delighted in Rational Liberty founded on Republican Principles. Patriotism and Philanthropy were innate virtues of his soul. He was a constant attendant on public worship, and a strict adherer to the principles of morality. He lived highly respected and died much lamented.

From a grateful sense of the early part which Capt. Russell took in our Glorious Revolution, the important military services which he rendered, at a period all important to the Liberties of his country; his uniform principles of Republicanism and benevolence through life, his remains were interred on the 5th inst with military honors. After a very pertinent and affecting prayer by the Rev. Solomon Aiken the funeral procession moving from the dwelling house of the deceased with solemnity, in the following order; Two companies of infantry, commanded by Capts. Varnum & Hildreth with solemn music with arms reversed, next the gentlemen present who had borne military commissions since the commencement of the Revolutionary War; then the corpse, followed by his aged widow, children, grandchildren, and other relatives, and a large body of respectable citizens.

When the troops reached the burial ground, they formed, resting on their arms, until the corpse, relatives and others passed, and the body was deposited; the troops then discharged three volleys over the grave.

The officers in and out of command and the troops attended the widow and relatives from the grave to the dwelling house of the dec'd; the companies were then marched to their place of parade and dismissed.

The military honors and other ceremonies were performed with solemn and decent deportment; each countenance seemed to express the heartfelt respect justly due to the deceased, and all retired with a gloom demonstrative of the last and final farewell of an affectionate friend."

He was instructor in military tactics of the Minute Men of Dracutt, having gained his knowledge from watching the British soldiery at their drills when he went to Boston—perhaps with farm produce.

"When the Provincial Congress thought proper to continue the Royal arrangement of the militia into regiments and companies as the best adapted rule of proceedure under existing circumstances, and agreed that there should be enlisted 12,000 men to act as Minute Men on any particular emergency, the volunteer companies of Dracutt, being attached to good order and government, reassumed their standing as private soldiers, and the whole company again organized and made choice of Stephen Russell as Captain, Ephraim Coburn as 1st Leftenant, Simon Coburn as 2nd Lt. and Abraham Coburn as Ensign. These were all respectable gentlemen, considerably advanced in life, but all of them almost totally uninformed in tactics and military discipline. In order to acquire a degree of necessary information in military matters they employed Joseph Bradley Varnum as an Instructor both to themselves and the men under their command, in which capacity he continued to serve them until after the Revolutionary War."

Abel Coburn

Abel Coburn was a descendent in the sixth generation from Edward[1]. He was born in Charlestown, Mass., August 24, 1816, and died October 2, 1894. He married Julia Ansart Varnum, and their home was on Varnum Avenue. His occupation was that of stone mason, but in later life he was a farmer. In 1871,

he became a mail carrier and carried the U. S. mail between Lowell and Windham, N. H., until 1877. He was a deacon in Pawtucket church for thirteen years and was the chairman of the Board of Selectmen in 1874. He was strictly honest in his dealings with his fellowmen and was a worthy citizen of the town.

Blood

James Blood came to America in 1639 with his sons, Robert, James, Richard and John. Richard was one of the earliest settlers of Groton, and the ancestor of the Dracut family. The first names recorded on the town books are the children of Abraham and Martha:

David, born November 5, 1751.

Martha, born August 4, 1757, died February 3, 1848.

Coburn[2], born September 15, 1759, married Jane Coburn, March 4, 1788.

Sarah, born November 24, 1761.

Hannah, born December 28, 1763.

Coburn, Jr.[3], born February 9, 1789, died April 24, 1860; married August 8, 1816; Clarissa G. Coburn, born October 15, 1790, died July 26, 1856; one child, Orford R.[4], born in 1826, married Ann M. Tabor, born in 1825.

Coburn[2] held the office of captain in the days of compulsory training, and his son, Coburn[3], was a colonel in the militia. David[2] was in Capt. Stephen Russell's company in the Revolution.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THIS history is now completed and an earnest endeavor has been made to include all subjects of interest to the readers and to present every available fact relating to such subject. To a great extent information based on tradition has been excluded and every effort made to record statements after subjecting them to proof. The record is a record of the past; the future of the town is yet to be enacted. That it will continue to keep pace with the march of improvement, there can be no doubt. Its resources are not yet fully developed, its broad acres can provide homes for a multitude of people without congestion, the enterprising spirit of its citizens will be manifested in the increased efficiency in agriculture, its manufactures and in education. The spirit of liberty, which existed in the time of our ancestors, not only in the time of the Revolution, but in the early settlement of the colonies, when oppressed by the royal governors, has been shown by their descendants whenever the clouds of war have gathered or the problems of peace have presented themselves to be solved.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 003 869 597 6